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John. Duke
of
Marlborough.

Engraved by W. Bond. from an
Original Miniature in the Possession of Lord Churchill

Published June 10. 1818 by Longman and Co.

MEMOIRS

OF

JOHN DUKE OF MARLBOROUGH,

WITH HIS

ORIGINAL CORRESPONDENCE:

COLLECTED FROM

THE FAMILY RECORDS AT BLENHEIM,

AND

OTHER AUTHENTIC SOURCES

ILLUSTRATED WITH

PORTRAITS, MAPS, AND MILITARY PLANS.

BY WILLIAM COXE, M.A. F.R.S. F.S.A.
ARCHDEACON OF WILTS.

SECOND EDITION.

IN SIX VOLUMES.

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MEMOIRS, &c.

CHAPTER 64.

1707—1708.

Return of Marlborough. — Parliamentary proceedings. — Coalition of the whigs and tories. — Debates on the state of the nation. — Censures against the admiralty and George Churchill. — Scrutiny into the affairs of Spain, and the conduct of the earl of Peterborough. — Speech of Marlborough. — Celebrated address to the queen, against the conclusion of peace, till the whole monarchy of Spain was restored to the house of Austria. — Reconciliation of the ministry and the whigs, and compromise with the queen, on the disposition of ecclesiastical preferments. — Termination of the discussion in both houses. — Conduct of Harley on the discovery of his cabals. — Suspected of conniving at the treasonable practices of Gregg, one of the clerks in his office. — Fruitless attempts of Marlborough and Godolphin to obtain his dismission. — Meeting of the cabinet council in the absence of the two ministers. — Refusal of the other members to enter into any deliberation. — Agitation of the public mind. — Discontent of the parliament, and threatened suspension of the supplies. — Resignation of Harley and his adherents. — Consequent changes in the administration. — Ascendancy of the whigs.

MARLBOROUGH arrived in England on the seventh of November, old style, and had the mortification to find the feuds in the cabinet more dangerous

and violent than they had appeared, even in the representations of his friends.

The whigs, indignant at the disappointment of their hopes, had realised their threats of a separation of interests, and had actually formed, if not a coalition, at least a secret understanding with the violent tories. Godolphin stood alone, exposed to the obloquy of both parties, and loaded at the same time with the displeasure of the queen. The administration, which in the preceding session of parliament had appeared so united and prosperous, was become a disjointed and ill-assorted mass, and exhibited all the symptoms of approaching dissolution.

The inactivity of the campaign in the Netherlands, the fatal defeat at Almanza, the failure of the enterprise against Toulon, and the want of some brilliant exploit, to satisfy the eager expectations of the people, afforded ample scope to that party spirit, which is inherent in our constitution, and which, at this particular period, was the more inflamed, because it had been long repressed by an unusual series of military successes. Every operation of the war became the theme of malignant insinuation, or open invective; and the unfortunate events in Spain furnished a prominent subject of reproach.

With the disasters in Spain was connected a vehement controversy on the conduct and merits of the earl of Peterborough, which greatly aggravated the perplexities arising from the distracted situation of foreign and domestic affairs.

We have already traced the wanderings of this eccentric peer from court to court, and his incessant, though fruitless endeavours to regain his lost consequence. Having dissipated a considerable part of his fortune, in his short, though brilliant career, he laid before the ministry a strong claim for pecuniary remuneration. Instead, however, of the compliance which he expected, he was charged with a counter demand of much larger extent, on the part of government, for neglecting to furnish a regular account of the vast sums entrusted to his disposition, which he had distributed with his usual caprice, sometimes withholding from the court of Barcelona even the necessary supplies, and sometimes lavishing his largesses, with an unsparing hand. Disgusted in temper, and impoverished in circumstances, he at length returned to England, to urge his pretensions in person, and to claim from the gratitude of his country that justice which he considered as withheld, by a parsimonious and selfish administration. Consulting only the dictates of wounded pride, he at first declined waiting on the great officers of the crown; and even deferred the customary testimony of respect towards the sovereign, until he found his conduct arraigned, and charges of mismanagement insinuated against him. He then demanded access to the royal presence; but received from lord Sunderland, as secretary of state, a notification, that the queen could not grant him an audience, until he had given a satisfactory explanation on three points which were laid to his charge. First, why he did not, in the preceding campaign, march to Madrid,

with the army under his command? Secondly, why he did not fulfil his instructions, in advancing to the king of Spain the supplies instrusted to his disposition? and thirdly, why he retired to Italy, without orders, and borrowed large sums of money on disadvantageous terms?

Still more incensed by this repulse, Peterborough openly joined the opposition; and appealed from the cabinet to the nation, by employing Dr. Freind, an eminent physician, to draw up a vindication of his conduct. In this publication, the most confidential documents and secret instructions were introduced, and he was exhibited as another Alexander or Cæsar, by whose chivalrous exploits kingdoms had been overrun; and to whose unmerited disgrace all the late misfortunes in the peninsula were attributable. Public sympathy threw a lustre over his character, and aided the efforts of every party in opposition to bring him into notice. Indeed, no time was ever more favourable for the investigation which he courted, nor could any subject afford a wider scope to popular eloquence and popular obloquy.

In this temper and state of parties the parliament resumed its functions on the 30th of October, and the earliest discussions displayed that spirit of discord, which reigned alike in the cabinet and the nation.

In consequence of the union, the same ceremonies took place as on the meeting of a new parliament. Mr. Smith, the sitting speaker, was rechosen, and the scottish members were introduced, with the usual formalities of a new election.

On the 10th of November the queen addressed the two houses in a speech, extenuating the failures of the campaign, and recommending vigour and unanimity, as the best means for restoring the prosperity of the Grand Alliance, and obtaining a safe and honourable peace.

On the report of the speech, the commons unanimously voted an address of thanks. After lamenting that the wise designs of the queen, for the advantage of the nation, and the good of the common cause, had not produced the desired effect, they assured her majesty, that no disappointment should discourage them from enabling her to reduce, in conjunction with her allies, the whole spanish monarchy to the obedience of the lawful sovereign king Charles.

But in the house of lords, which had hitherto displayed less tendency to factious opposition, and more energy in support of the war, the strongest symptoms of discontent appeared. Before the usual motion for an address, Wharton made a violent speech on the decay of trade, and the scarcity of money. He was followed by Somers, who expatiated on the ill state and mismanagement of the navy, and the great losses of the merchants for want of convoys. The earl of Stamford endeavoured to repress these invectives, by recommending an address in the usual form; but this suggestion was strenuously resisted by the whig lords, as well as by the tory chiefs, Rochester and Nottingham; and the tide of opposition proving too powerful to be stemmed, the motion was suffered to fall.

These topics were resumed with increasing virulence on the twelfth. On this occasion the whigs repeated their accusations, and an order was unanimously passed for the whole house, in a committee, to enquire into the state of the nation, in regard to the fleet and trade. Such was the curiosity excited by this question, that the queen herself attended on the 19th, the day appointed for the discussion.

The attack was opened by a petition subscribed by two hundred merchants of London, detailing their losses by sea, and bitterly censuring the neglect and mismanagement of the navy. Wharton, who had presented the petition, commenced the debate, and set the example to his colleagues, by his open complaints against the admiralty in general, and his indirect insinuations against admiral Churchill in particular.

The leading whig peers adopted the same strain of argument; but the tories, instead of confining themselves to the original heads of accusation, laboured to direct the attack against the ministry collectively, and argued that the public grievances were not to be removed by partial remedies, but by a radical change of administration.

The whigs, who had calculated on the co-operation of the tories, were displeased with their zeal, and hoped to divert the ferment, which they had raised, by recurring to the original topics of discussion. Among other expedients, lord Halifax moved for the appointment of a committee, to receive proposals for encouraging trade and privateering in the West Indies. In this suggestion

the ministry concurred, from a similar motive, and the lord treasurer himself seconding the proposal, it was carried unanimously. A future day was then appointed for the prosecution of the inquiry.

Marlborough having taken the usual oaths, on the 10th of November, was present at both these debates, and witnessed with regret the hostile attack, which the whigs had so long threatened against his brother. Although he cautiously avoided entering into the discussion, his feelings were deeply wounded by the severe reflections of the whigs; and at the close of the debate, he warmly expostulated with Wharton, who had particularly distinguished himself by the bitterness of his invectives. *

The scrutiny was afterwards continued; but on the 15th of December another topic was added, at the instigation of the tories, by a motion for a committee, to enquire into the conduct of the war in Spain, and the cause of the failure in the expedition against Toulon.

Lord Peterborough was now brought forward, and Rochester, who took the lead, expressed his surprise that a commander who had been sent abroad, with so many commissions and characters, should have been divested of all, and yet no examination instituted into his conduct on his return. He was warmly seconded by Nottingham and Haversham. But the whigs maintained a cautious reserve, and even Halifax contented himself with ambiguous expressions of approbation, by alluding

* Tindal, vol. xvi. p. 489.

to the printed account of Dr. Freind, and observing that the high achievements which it commemorated, were only to be equalled by those related in Quintius Curtius. *

Peterborough spoke in more brief and modest terms than usual, expressing a hope that he should be permitted to vindicate his character at some future time; and asserting that he had declined pressing his justification, not to interrupt the public business. The result, however, was a motion for papers and documents, particularly for the orders and instructions sent to lord Galway, lord Peterborough, and lord Rivers; a statement of the sums of money, with the disposition of which they had been respectively intrusted; and also of the number of troops at the battle of Almanza, and what account had been taken of lord Peterborough's proceedings since his return. The ensuing days were chiefly occupied with motions for papers and reports, and other preparations for the grand inquiry.

During these dissensions the commons had voted a considerable supply, and the queen repaired to the house of lords, to thank the parliament for their promptitude and zeal. She concluded by requesting an augmentation of forces in Spain, Portugal, and Italy, and announced her resolution to encourage and favour those only, who were willing and desirous to bring the war to a safe and honourable conclusion. A committee was accordingly appointed, to draw up an address of

* Mr. Vernon to the duke of Shrewsbury, Dec. 16. 1708.

thanks for her majesty's most gracious speech, consisting principally of whigs.

The ensuing day being fixed for the resumption of the important debate on the state of the nation, the public expectation was raised to so high a pitch, that the lobbies were crowded at an early hour, and even the queen herself again attended *incognita*. The new-drawn address being reported by the duke of Bolton, chairman of the committee, was unanimously approved. It commended the spirit and resolution manifested by the queen, for the vigorous prosecution of the war in Spain, Portugal, and Italy, and for strengthening the duke of Savoy, who had deserved so well of the whole confederacy. After expressing their hopes that her example would incite all the allies to a noble imitation, they added, "Your majesty's favour will always be the highest encouragement to your subjects; but the zeal we have for the preservation of your majesty's person and government, and the duty we owe to our country, always has, and ever will oblige us, to do all that lies in our power for supporting your majesty in this just war, till it be brought to a safe and happy conclusion."

The lord treasurer and principal officers of the household were then, as usual, commissioned to receive the pleasure of the sovereign, with regard to the presentation of this address. On their departure the House was put into a committee, to resume the debate on the state of the nation, and the management of the war in Spain.

This was the opportunity which was taken to

bring forward the question so long threatened on the conduct of lord Peterborough. Rochester again opened the discussion, by applauding his courage and skill; and after enumerating his services, observed, that as it was the usual custom to thank or call to account, any person who had been employed abroad in so eminent a post, he suggested the necessity of a similar proceeding in the present case. Halifax supported Rochester, by enlarging on the justice of a general examination; and added, that such an inquiry was most anxiously desired by the noble earl himself. Several peers followed in the debate, some throwing out the severest reflections on Galway, and others stigmatising him as a foreigner. The policy of prosecuting the war in Spain, till the whole monarchy should be recovered, was strongly and repeatedly urged. Peterborough himself exclaimed, "We should give the queen nineteen shillings in the pound, rather than make peace on any other terms;" and added, with an affectation of disinterested zeal, "If necessary, I will return to Spain, and serve even under the earl of Galway!"

Rochester seized this opportunity to enforce the darling principle of his party against an offensive war in the Netherlands. He observed, "We seem to neglect the principal business, and to mind only accessories. I cannot forget the saying of a great general, the old duke of Schomberg, 'that to attack France in the Netherlands, is taking a bull by the horns.' I therefore propose, that we should remain on the defensive in that quarter, and send from our army fifteen or twenty thousand men into

Catalonia." * He was followed by Nottingham, who bitterly complained that Spain, the principal object of the war, was almost abandoned.

These reflections on the conduct of Marlborough, were too obvious to pass unnoticed. He rose, and with great warmth exposed the insidious proposition of Rochester, and represented the necessity of increasing, instead of lessening the forces in the Netherlands. "The first reason," he observed, "which induces me to object to this proposal is, that in Spain most of the enemy's strong places may be kept with one battalion in each; whereas, the strong fortresses in Brabant, which I have reduced, require twenty times that number for their preservation: secondly, if our army in the Netherlands be weakened, and the french gain any considerable advantage there, the discontented party in Holland, who are not a few, and who bear

* We find some sensible remarks on this insidious motion, in a letter from Maynwaring to the duchess.

"There is nothing that one reflects upon more naturally, after this glorious conquest, than the vile attempt that was made last winter to draw the forces out of Flanders, to which I remember your grace was a witness in the house of lords. Of all the attempts that I have known to serve the king of France, that was the plainest, and yet the best laid, with respect to the fools among ourselves, who were sure to be catched with any thing that looked like carrying on the spanish war. * * * * * * *

"If one can wound an enemy at the heart, it is ridiculous to think of cutting his finger; and that I take to be the case with France now. We are going into its very vitals, and tearing up by the roots that trunk of power, that with its branches had almost overshadowed Europe. For which reason, the duke of Marlborough never can forgive those men that would, by lessening his army, have taken from him the means of doing this great service to his country, but will certainly be as good a whig as your grace next winter, which I wish, for many reasons, and for none more than that I am sure it will please you extremely."

with impatience the great charges of the war, will not fail to cry aloud for peace."

Here he was tauntingly interrupted by Rochester, who expressed his wonder that the noble peer, who had ever been conspicuous for calmness and moderation, should now lose his natural temper. He insisted on the absolute necessity of succouring Spain, and requested his grace to oblige their lordships, by apprising them how they might obtain troops to send thither, for that purpose. "The obligation," he added, "will be the greater as lord Peterborough has reported the opinion of prince Eugene, that the germans would rather be decimated than sent into Spain."

Marlborough repelled this sarcasm with becoming dignity. He acknowledged his warmth, but apologised, by observing that the subject was too important to be agitated without concern. He continued: —

"Although it is improper to disclose secret projects in so numerous an assembly, because the enemy will not fail to be informed of them; yet I am authorised by the queen to gratify your lordships, by the assurance that measures have been already concerted with the emperor, for forming an army of forty thousand men, under the command of the duke of Savoy, and for sending succours to King Charles. It is also to be hoped that prince Eugene may be induced to take the command in Spain, in which case the germans will gladly follow him. The only difficulty which may be objected to this scheme is, the usual tardiness of the court of Vienna; and it must be

admitted, that if the seven thousand recruits, which the emperor promised for Piedmont, had arrived in time, the enterprise against Toulon would probably have been attended with success. But I dare engage my word, that for the future his imperial majesty will punctually perform his promises."

This dignified reply was so explicit and satisfactory, that even Rochester could start no plausible objection; but with an affectation of candour, observed, "Had we known sooner how well all things had been managed, this debate might have been spared."

The secondary question on the conduct and merits of Peterborough was now completely superseded, and Marlborough had scarcely ceased speaking, before lord Somers moved a resolution, in which he expressed his conviction, that all would agree; namely, "that no peace could be reasonable or safe, either for her majesty or her allies, if Spain and the West Indies were suffered to continue in the power of the house of Bourbon."

No objection being expressed, lord Wharton, after adverting to the communication made by the duke of Marlborough, proposed an address of thanks to the queen, for her care, as well as for her instances with the emperor to send a considerable force to Spain, under the command of prince Eugene. Lastly, lord Halifax moved a resolution, pressing "that her majesty would be pleased to continue her solicitations with the emperor, for this end, as well as for reinforcing

the duke of Savoy, and strengthening the army on the Rhine."

These several resolutions were sanctioned by the house, and to embody them in the usual form, a committee was appointed, in which the names of Marlborough, Godolphin, and Peterborough were introduced, and in which no tory was admitted, except the earl of Rochester. An address was accordingly presented to the house founded on these resolutions, and the concurrence of the commons obtained.

This measure originated with the whigs, was carried by their influence, and evidently intended as a disavowal of the objections, urged by Rochester, against an offensive war in the Netherlands. It is, however, singular, that these resolutions, which announced a principle, hitherto not so distinctly avowed, were carried in the absence of the lord treasurer. Whether the motion was made with the approbation of Marlborough and Godolphin cannot be discovered; but it is certain, that when passed, it obtained their sanction; for the queen returned an answer, expressing her perfect concurrence in the united opinion of the two houses, that no peace could be safe or honourable, unless the whole monarchy of Spain was restored to the house of Austria. *

* It is very singular that this sudden alteration of the address, and the manner in which it was proposed and carried, in the absence of the lord treasurer, should have escaped the notice of all our historians. I was fortunately enabled to discover the particulars of the transaction, from a curious letter written by Mr. Vernon to the duke of Shrewsbury, December 20th, and from a careful examination of the Lords' Journals, for Dec. 19th, 1707.

The same questions were agitated in the lower house; but the management of the war in Spain, and the conduct of Peterborough, occupied less attention than the complaints against the admiralty. Many of the members being themselves merchants, and affected by the losses at sea, it was imagined that the severest censures would be passed against admiral Churchill, who was represented as the cause of the naval disasters, and accused not only of negligence, but even of fraud and malice.

After a long and attentive investigation of different petitions and reports, a motion was made, that the petitioners had proved all their allegations to the satisfaction of the committee. Admiral Churchill strenuously opposed it, and ably justified his own conduct as well as that of the council. He contended, that though the petitioners had proved their losses, they had not substantiated their charges against the admiralty; he enlarged on the injustice of deciding on so momentous a question, from partial evidence; and obtained a suspension of the vote, till the admiralty could produce their justification, which they were actually preparing. *

The political cause of this sudden alteration in the address, without a single dissenting voice, is still mysterious, and not easy to be developed. Vernon seems to impute it to the reconciliation between the two ministers and the whigs; and bishop Hare, in a letter to the duchess in 1710, attributes it solely to the whigs, and states it to have been intended as a mortification to Godolphin.

After representing the fact as it occurred, we must leave the decision to those who may discover more distinct and positive information.

* Vernon to the duke of Shrewsbury, Dec. 9. and 13.

During this discussion, however, a material change took place in the temper and views of parties. The successful efforts of the whigs convinced the ministers that they were formidable antagonists, and that their junction with the tories might convulse the state, and dissolve the whole system of foreign and domestic policy. They therefore found it necessary to regain the confidence of their former supporters; and especially to convince them that the obstacles which they had experienced in the cabinet, and the partialities which had given them such disgust, were derived from other quarters. A sense of mutual interest seems, therefore, to have produced a new and temporary reconciliation.

The queen was not ignorant of this accommodation, and foreseeing that the accumulated strength of the whigs and ministry would lead to a new attack against her tory partialities, she submitted to some condescensions which mark her alarm. Assurances were given to the whigs, that although she had too far engaged herself to recede from her promises, in favour of the two tory bishops, she would promote no more of that party in future, to the higher offices of the church. This assurance she gave personally in the cabinet council; and the dukes of Devonshire and Somerset were authorised to communicate it to the whig leaders in the house of commons. She even so far conquered her natural bias, as to bestow the see of Norwich on Dr. Trimmel, the tutor and friend of lord Sunderland, and to confer the office of Regius Professor, at Oxford, on Dr. Potter,

who was recommended by Marlborough, to the exclusion of Dr. Smalridge, and to the great displeasure of the university.

The effects of this accommodation were speedily apparent in the house of commons. The whigs became lukewarm in their charges; and the tories, suspecting that the attack against the admiralty was merely to promote the advancement of lord Orford to the management of the navy, would not give their aid in promoting the objects of their political rivals. Besides these motives, which actuated the great mass of both parties, many individuals were unwilling to offend the queen, by an attack against her husband; or Marlborough, by an accusation of his brother. Accordingly, the complaints and debates, which had so deeply agitated the nation at the commencement of the session, ended in a resolution, merely recommending the queen to appoint an additional number of cruisers, for the better security of trade.

The house of lords, in which the whig interest was predominant, did not so readily desist from their charges against the admiralty board. In an address, which was drawn up on the 25th of February, they entered into a brief review of the whole examination; and amidst warm expressions of respect for the person and character of the prince, they directed the most acrimonious accusations against the influence of admiral Churchill, though without mentioning his name. They represented him as making "the worst use imaginable" of the confidence reposed in him by the lord high admiral; of screening himself under his protection,

and of insulting the legislature, by a vindication which conveyed not the slightest assurance of future amendment. They concluded with expressing a hope "that seamen would be encouraged, trade protected, discipline restored, and a new spirit and vigour put into the whole administration of the navy."*

This ebullition of spleen was, however, confined to the affairs of the admiralty; for the scrutiny into the conduct of the war in Spain terminated no less favourably.

In subsequent debates the earl of Peterborough was again brought forward, and a regular investigation made into his conduct. The letters from king Charles, and the complaints which had been advanced against him, were submitted to parliament, and drew forth, on his part, volumes of memorials and justifications, with crowds of witnesses. This investigation having rendered the affairs of Spain and Portugal the subject of general interest, the opposition deserted the cause of Peterborough, to direct their invectives against the misconduct of the generals, and the deficiency of the british troops, in the battle of Almanza. The much-debated matter began at length to weary the public attention, and was finally regarded as a mere chicane of opposition. A statement was produced by government, to account for the deficiency of the troops; and though great, it appeared to be owing to the circumstances of the war, not to intentional neglect. After the usual proposals

* Journals of the Lords, Feb. 25.

and amendments, an address was passed, thanking the queen for taking measures to retrieve the affairs of Spain, and providing foreign troops for that service. This decision terminated the inquiry, and relieved Marlborough and the ministry from embarrassments of no ordinary magnitude.*

The reconciliation between the ministers and the whigs, was the prelude to the downfall of Harley; and no change in the course of a long political life, was more deeply felt, or more reluctantly sanctioned, by the duke of Marlborough.

Abhorrent of party connections, and always dreading the violent spirit of the whigs, his fear of becoming the mere instrument of their projects overcame his sense of their influence, as well as his conviction of the imperious necessity, which compelled him to form a cordial union with those who alone concurred in his principles of foreign policy. He was also restrained by a profound respect and gratitude for the queen, and an unwillingness to wound her feelings, or shock her prejudices, even in cases where her own interest and honour were concerned. Lastly, with a high opinion of the integrity, as well as the abilities of Harley, it was not without an arduous struggle, that he could be induced wholly to withdraw his confidence from a minister, whom he had protected and trusted, and to whose professions he listened, even at the moment when repeated proofs occurred to justify a suspicion of his duplictiy.

* Journals of Lords and Commons; Chandler's Debates; Letters from Mr. Vernon to the duke of Shrewsbury; Burnet; Tindal; Conduct of the Duchess of Marlborough; and Other Side of the Question.

Circumstances, however, rapidly accumulated, which furnished indirect, but convincing proofs of his secret intercourse with the queen by the agency of Mrs. Masham; and of his schemes to form a party and an administration of his own, either by restoring the preponderance of the tories, or by creating a schism among those who supported the government.

Harley saw the indecision of the two ministers, and their dread of being domineered by the party with whom they were associated. Hoping thereby to take advantage of their embarrassment, he requested an interview with both, on the plea of clearing himself from the aspersions under which he laboured. The meeting accordingly took place*, and produced, if any, but a temporary effect; for the dispute was brought to a crisis, by various incidents, which at once awakened the suspicions of the ministers, and diminished the credit of the secretary, in the house of commons.

A clerk in his office, of the name of Gregg, whom he had employed in Scotland and elsewhere as a spy, had formed a secret correspondence with Chamillard, the french secretary of state, for the purpose of communicating the secrets of the english cabinet. This correspondence was carried on through the medium of Tallard's letters, which were sent to the secretary's office, to be read, before they were transmitted to France. Gregg had not long been engaged in this treasonable intercourse, before one of these packets was inter-

† Letters between Harley and Godolphin, Dec. 5.—Somerville's Queen Anne, p. 627.

cepted, and found to contain the copy of a letter, which the queen was to write to the emperor, requesting him to send prince Eugene into Spain. So exact was his intelligence, that the additions made by Godolphin to the original draft of the secretary, were specifically distinguished.

In consequence of this discovery, Gregg was arrested on the 30th of December, and after an examination, in which he acknowledged his guilt, was brought to a public trial at the Old Bailey, and convicted on his own confession. The circumstances of the transaction, as well as his dependence on Harley, appear to have given some colour to the accusation previously advanced against the secretary, of a correspondence with the french court, which Marlborough had indignantly repelled.

Another circumstance, which occurred at the same time, also contributed to affect the credit of Harley. Vallière and Bera, two smugglers, whom he had employed to procure intelligence between Calais and Boulogne, had profited by his protection and confidence, to convey information to the enemy. They were likewise arrested; and although their treasonable practices were perhaps only the usual deceptions of such agents, yet, at the moment, the discovery made considerable impression on the public mind, and was not without its influence on Marlborough and Godolphin.

These discoveries gave weight to a variety of indirect hints, which the ministers had before overlooked, of Harley's machinations with the queen and their enemies; and, at the same time,

the consciousness of the critical situation in which he stood, forced the secretary to become more active in his intrigues, and to employ his efforts in widening the breach between the ministers and the whigs. In particular he seems to have recurred to the interposition of the duke of Buckingham, to effect a coalition between the moderate of both parties, and instigated the queen to send messages to the leading tories, exhorting them to vindicate her dignity against the encroachments of the whigs. Mutual fears and jealousies brought the affair to a crisis. Before the close of January, Harley received, from the attorney-general, a formal notice that he had fallen under the displeasure of Godolphin. He instantly appealed to Marlborough, as to his patron and protector. In a confidential interview, Marlborough frankly acquainted him with the motives of the coldness which he had experienced, both from himself and the treasurer, and even descended to particulars. Harley, however, was not disconcerted, but again appealed to Godolphin, treated the charges against him as artful misrepresentations, and concluded with those professions of innocence and zeal for their service, which he had so often employed. The brief and indignant answer of Godolphin proved that his professions had now lost their weight, and cut off all hopes of a reconciliation.

"I have received your letter, and am very sorry for what has happened, to lose the good opinion I had so much inclination to have of you; but I cannot help seeing, nor believing my senses. I

am very far from having deserved it of you. God forgive you."*

Having at length taken their reluctant resolution, the two ministers found, in their attempts to remove their dangerous rival, a mortifying proof of his interest with their royal mistress. In vain they laid their complaints before the queen, and insisted on his dismission. She appeared to have forgot their deserts; and however necessary their services were, at this period, to the safety and honour of the country, she evinced a determination not to abandon her confidential adviser.

At this juncture the whigs became sensible of their injustice to the two ministers, and felt that the fate of their party, as well as that of the general and treasurer, depended on the disgrace of the obnoxious minister. The whole body conveyed to Marlborough an assurance of their unanimous and zealous support; and to prove their resolution of pushing their hostility against Harley, a committee of seven whig lords was appointed to examine Gregg and the two smugglers, for their treacherous correspondence. For this purpose, Gregg received a respite, to give time for his examination, and to draw from him a farther confession, by the prospect of a pardon.

These circumstances discouraged neither the queen nor Harley. She persisted in her purpose, and reports of a plan for a new ministry were circulated, with a design of intimidation. A decisive step was therefore necessary; and no alter-

* Hardwicke Papers — Somerville's Queen Anne, p. 628. where this as well as the preceding letter is printed.

native remained, but to bend to the interest of Harley, or resign their posts. Accordingly both Marlborough and Godolphin joined in announcing their resolution, and stating that the queen should no longer consider them as her servants, if Harley was not dismissed. The letter of Godolphin is not extant, but that of Marlborough is still preserved.

" Madam; — Since all the faithful services I have endeavoured to do you, and the unwearied pains I have taken for these ten days, to satisfy and convince your majesty's own mind, have not been able to give you any such impressions of the false and treacherous proceedings of Mr. secretary Harley to lord treasurer and myself, but that your majesty is pleased to countenance and to support him, to the ruin of your own business at home; I am very much afraid it will be attended with the sorrow and amazement of all Europe, as soon as the noise of it gets abroad. And I find myself obliged to have so much regard to my own honour and reputation, as not to be every day made a sacrifice to falsehood and treachery, but most humbly to acquaint your majesty that no consideration can make me serve any longer with that man. And I beseech your majesty to look upon me, from this moment, as forced out of your service, as long as you think fit to continue him in it.

" No heart is fuller of duty to your majesty than mine; nobody has more sincere wishes for your prosperity, nor shall more constantly pray for your majesty's long life, and for your happiness both

here and hereafter. I am always, with the greatest respect, and the truest zeal for your service, &c."*

Still, however, the queen persisted in her resolution, and encouraged Harley to maintain his post. On the 9th of February, a meeting of the cabinet council was summoned, as usual, and the customary notice sent to the two ministers. Resolving not again to sit at the same board with the secretary, they waited on the queen, and respectfully repeated their determination. She appeared little concerned at the proposed resignation of the treasurer, but was much affected with the declaration of the general, and employed the most earnest intreaties to dissuade him from his purpose. The fate of England and of Europe hung on his decision; but he proved the warmth of his friendship, and the consistency of his character; he did not belie his repeated asseverations, that he would stand or fall with Godolphin. He firmly and manfully resisted her instances, and retired from her presence with firmness and respect.

This disappointment, however, did not intimidate the queen. The cabinet council assembled at the appointed time, and after she had taken her seat, Harley proceeded to open the business of the meeting, which related to the affairs of his department. The members at first appeared as if absorbed in reflection: half-smothered murmurs were

* The draft of this letter is written in the hand of Marlborough, except a trifling alteration by Godolphin, which is introduced in the text. The original runs thus, "*that your majesty is pleased to countenance and support him, to the ruin of your own business, and of your faithful servants at home, which may be attended with the sorrow and amazement, &c.*"

then heard, and the secretary paused. A momentary silence ensuing, the members turned to each other, with looks of surprise and uneasiness, till the duke of Somerset arose, and, with warmth, exclaimed, "I do not see how we can deliberate, when the commander-in-chief and the lord treasurer are absent." On this unexpected observation, which plainly expressed the sense of the meeting, Harley was still more disconcerted, and the queen remained silent. The observation being repeated, the queen broke up the unfinished deliberation, and withdrew with evident emotions of anger, alarm, and disappointment.*

The result could not long be concealed, and the agitation of the public mind became extreme. Expressions of concern and dissatisfaction were heard in both houses of parliament; and the commons in particular, suffered a bill of supply to lie on their table, though ordered for that day. The prospect of the treasurer's resignation excited similar discontent among the monied men in the city, by whom his abilities and integrity were best appreciated.

Still, however, with her characteristic pertinacity, Anne did not abandon her purpose. But Harley was conscious, that with the load of suspicion under which he laboured, detested by the whigs, and not cordially supported, even by the whole body of tories, he could not conduct the government against the current of public opinion. He therefore entreated the queen to accept his resigna-

* Conduct of the Duchess, p. 253.—Burnet, vol. v. p. 373.

tion, and his instances were seconded by the prince of Denmark, who dreaded a convulsion in the state. Her resolution was swayed by these alarming symptoms, and the representations of her husband. The next day she summoned the duke of Marlborough into her presence; and after some bitter expostulations, which spoke her anger and mortification, she informed him that Mr. Harley should retire from her service.

Accordingly on the 11th of February, Harley formally resigned the seals. His place was transferred to Mr. Boyle, a zealous whig; and the office of chancellor of the exchequer was restored to Mr. Smith, who held it, with that of speaker, during the short remainder of the session. The resignation of Harley was followed by those of St. John, Mansell, and Harcourt; and the posts of comptroller of the household, and secretary at war, were transferred to earl Cholmondeley, and Mr. Robert Walpole, who had gained the esteem and confidence of Marlborough, by his diligence and zeal in office. The queen, however, was too deeply mortified, to accept the recommendation of Godolphin in favour of Sir James Montagu, brother of lord Halifax, for the office of attorney-general; and this post, though so necessary to the public administration of justice, continued vacant till the close of the year.

Meanwhile the examination of Gregg had proceeded, and though the criminal continued to acknowledge his own guilt, he repeatedly and solemnly declared that Harley was innocent of the slightest connivance in his treasonable practices.

As his confession threw no new light on the transaction, he was deemed unworthy of the royal mercy, and instances were made for his execution. The queen at first refused to consent, and appeared extremely agitated on the slightest allusion to the conduct of the criminal, as it affected * Harley. But as a pardon would have fixed a stigma on the disgraced minister, and as the behaviour of the criminal was highly insolent, she at length gave her sanction, and a dying confession published in his name, and at his request, strongly asserted his own guilt and contrition, and at the same time vindicated the innocence of his principal.

On the 18th of March a report from the committee of lords was published. Although the examination had produced no new fact, to disprove the asseverations of the criminal; yet as it shewed that Harley had been guilty of culpable negligence, in suffering papers of the highest importance and secrecy, to remain open to the inspection of the common clerks in his office, it left an unfavourable and indelible impression on his official character, in the public mind, though it appeared to produce no change in the sentiments of the queen.

letter from Mrs. Burnet to the duchess is here introduced, to shew the opinion of the whigs, and the burst of zeal and attachment, which the crisis called forth from their party.

"*Tuesday morning.*—Had I not been prevented, I had yesterday wrote, to wish your grace joy of

* Letter from Godolphin to the duke of Marlborough.

the late victory, which I hope, if it please God, will have as happy effects as any the duke of Marlborough ever got. I should have done it before the success, since I was well satisfied the resolution was right, be the event what it would; for 'tis not to be expressed with what indignation it was generally received, that the lord treasurer and the duke of Marlborough should be put one moment in the balance with Mr. Harley and his party, who in all respects have appeared so far inferior to what they were ever thought to be, though I am confidently told that Mr. Harley would have undertook the weight, if the queen would have ventured.

"The danger the duke of Marlborough was in of being taken once in Holland by the french, did not more plainly shew the love and esteem that country had for him, than this accident has shewed, that however displeased some may be, for particular matters, yet that they have an esteem and sense of the great obligations we are under, and the merit of the lord treasurer and the duke of Marlborough. Had this affair hung longer in suspense, most, if not all the whigs of consideration would have laid down their places; and not only the bishop of Salisbury, but most of the other bishops would have come and offered lord treasurer and the duke of Marlborough all the service in their power, and have been ready to join in any thing to shew their regard to the duke and lord treasurer. And this I don't say now, when it may look like making a court after a victory, but what was their thoughts when the worst was feared. With respect to things beyond sea, I am glad it came to so short an issue;

and I ought to add, out of the regard I have to the queen's character, which cannot but suffer in this preposterous struggle, but also for the honour of lord treasurer and the duke of Marlborough, it had been better it had lasted a few days longer, that people might have had opportunities to have shewed their zeal for them, and to have more firmly united all honest men that mean well together, and discovered who were so. For I am told, that the most humoursome of the whigs, in the house of commons, were ready to offer their service, and all, in general, shewed anger or contempt at the arrogance of Mr. Harley.

" I will add no more to this letter, but what I pray for, that the lord treasurer and the duke of Marlborough may make the best use of the great advantages this has given them, and improve the good understanding and confidence this has laid the foundation of, with all wise and honest men that love the queen; for I am sure they are the only friends that can be relied on. 'Tis presumption in me to give any advice; but some things are so plainly for their service, that whoever loves them cannot but see it, and consequently cannot but wish, at least, they may do them."

CHAPTER 65.

1708.

Projected invasion of England in favour of the pretender. — Zeal and activity of Marlborough and Godolphin, in discovering and defeating the attempt. — Spirited and loyal conduct of the parliament and nation. — Addresses of both houses, and reply of the queen. — Ascendancy of the whigs, and change in the character of the administration. — Design of the duchess of Marlborough to retire from court — Extorts a promise from the queen to confer her offices on her two daughters. — Their increasing misunderstanding, and its effect on public affairs.

The dismission of Harley and his adherents was rendered popular by an invasion from France, which was preparing at the moment when the change was in agitation.

The court of St. Germains had long endeavoured to persuade the king of France to invade England, for the purpose of establishing the young pretender on the throne of his ancestors. But although they exaggerated the number of their adherents, and expatiated on the internal divisions of Great Britain, Louis had not hitherto listened to their applications; either because he found sufficient employment for his forces in other quarters, or because an unsuccessful attempt might ruin the interest of the Stuarts. At this period, however, circum-

stances seemed to favour the long-meditated project; while the humbled state of the french monarch induced him to make a desperate effort, in order to create, at least, a diversion in the country on which the fate of the war depended.

The recent disagreement between the ministers and the principal whigs, the influence of the tories among the country gentlemen and clergy, the number of those who were really devoted to the Stuart line, the clamours excited against the burthens of the war, and the cry of peace which began to be raised in every quarter, proved an increase of disaffection towards the government, which was readily mistaken by the exiled prince, for a proof of attachment to his cause: this opinion was also corroborated by the number of every rank and station, who had carried on, or affected to carry on, a secret correspondence with his emissaries.

It was, however, in Scotland, where the principal leaven of disaffection existed. The warlike clans of the highlands, secluded among their mountains, nurtured in their prejudices, inured to danger and hardship, and passively obedient to their feudal lords, fostered an ardent and zealous attachment to the descendants of their ancient kings; and this attachment derived new force from the events which had recently occurred. In the first part of the reign of Anne, the scots had succeeded in extorting the Act of Security, which was calculated to render them a separate and independent nation on her death; and, therefore, they witnessed, with indignation and horror, the union of the two countries, which destroyed their darling

hopes, by not only incorporating them with a people against whom they still felt all their ancient rivalry, but even by settling the eventual transfer of their crown on a foreign family. These prejudices were heightened by the alarms wilfully spread among them, that the union with England would be no less detrimental to their commerce and landed property, than to their freedom. Besides, the nobility were degraded in their own opinion and in that of the public, by the dissolution of the scottish parliament, and their partial exclusion from the british house of lords. It was impossible, therefore, to satisfy all the great families; and while the dukes of Queensbury and Argyle, the earls of Seaford and Stair, and other nobles, supported the connection with England, the disaffected found active and zealous chiefs, in the dukes of Hamilton and Athol, and the lords Buchan, Errol, and Marischal. In consequence of these elements of disaffection, the opposition to the union rose almost into open rebellion, and the articles were publicly burnt in several towns.

Calculating, therefore, on the timidity of the queen, and her known dislike of the Hanover line, on the former correspondence of Marlborough and Godolphin with the exiled family, on the promises held forth by many among the tories, and on the zealous support of the english jacobites, as well as the recent schism of the whigs, the disaffected hoped to produce a new revolution, and to secure at least the reversion of the crown to the lineal descendant of their former sovereigns. Hence they importuned the court of St. Germains for a

military force to call this latent spirit into action; and their applications were earnestly submitted to the french cabinet. Accordingly agents were dispatched into Scotland, and transmitted the most gratifying intelligence of the general spirit manifested by the bulk of the nation. They dwelt on the scanty force, which was employed to maintain the public tranquillity, both in Scotland and in the North of England, and described the facility of seizing the principal fortresses, and the public treasure. They represented the delay which must ensue, before assistance could be obtained from abroad, without the previous consent of parliament; and argued that a prompt and decisive effort would be attended with certain success.

These representations produced the desired effect. The expedition was fitted out at Dunkirk, and consisted of 8 sail of the line, 24 frigates, and 66 long boats, with numerous transports, conveying 12 battalions, 13,000 stand of arms, and a store of military accoutrements. The command was intrusted to the chevalier de Forbin, a distinguished naval officer; and the young pretender, who had just attained his twentieth year, accompanied the expedition, under the name of the chevalier de St. George. He was furnished with services of gold plate, liveries and uniforms, and with every requisite for a splendid court. Anticipating the functions of sovereignty, he created a master of the scottish mint, and even issued orders for the regulation of a new coinage.* He was loaded with the presents and contributions of the

* Lockhart's Memoirs.

roman court, and obtained the blessing of the pope on his colours and standards, which were decorated with the royal motto, "Dieu et mon droit," and other appropriate inscriptions.

These preparations, however, did not escape the vigilance of the english government. Marlborough received early intelligence of the design, from his friends in Holland, as well as from his spies in France; and the active zeal which he evinced as commander-in-chief, is proved by a confidential letter to general Cadogan, whom he had left as temporary agent with the dutch government, and in whose diligence and fidelity he reposed implicit confidence.

"*St. James's, Feb.* 17. — Upon what you writ the last post to Mr. Cardonel, and the advice come from other parts, of the preparations making at Dunkirk, her majesty has thought fit, that upon receipt of this, you forthwith repair to Flanders, and by all possible means inform yourself of the enemy's designs, giving notice of what you can learn, by every opportunity, and if you find it requisite, by frequent expresses, both by Ostend and the Brill. Her majesty does likewise think fit, in case there be any good grounds to believe the enemy have formed a design of landing in these parts, or in North Britain, that there be a proportionable number of her majesty's foot forces, not only kept in readiness to embark immediately, but does farther recommend it to your care, if the enemy should embark with an intention of landing in Great Britain, before you have any other orders from hence, that then you put her majesty's troops

on ship-board with all possible speed, either at Ostend or in Zealand, and come yourself with them, to the first convenient port you can make. And you are, in what relates to the particular troops to be made choice of on this occasion, to concert with, and observe the directions of lieutenant-general Lumley, to whom I likewise write on this subject, as I do to M. de Overkirk, desiring them withal, as I do to you, that it may be kept as secret as the service will allow. And if the States have any men of war in Zealand, or ready in their ports, you are to apply to them, for their assistance herein."

In conformity with these instructions, Cadogan obtained from the dutch government a promise of immediate assistance in troops and ships; and repairing to Brussels, concerted with Overkirk the mode and means of transport, as well as of supplying the void left in the garrisons by the intended drafts. At Ghent he consulted the commander-in-chief, general Lumley, and obtained orders for the immediate march of ten battalions. Proceeding next to Ostend, he made every preparation for the transport of the troops to England, on the first notice that the french were actually embarked, on board the fleet prepared at Dunkirk, for the expedition.

In England the war-department displayed the vigorous impulse of Marlborough. Drafts were made from the horse and foot guards, and several regiments of infantry were ordered to join the earl of Leven, commander-in-chief in Scotland, who had taken possession of the castle of Edinburgh.

Others were collected on the north-east coast of Ireland, to be ready for immediate embarkation.

The admiralty also exonerated themselves from the stigma under which they had recently laboured, by their vigour and promptitude. Without diminishing the convoy for the Lisbon fleet, which consisted of no less than twelve english and five dutch men of war, they fitted out two squadrons of twenty-three british and three dutch men of war, which sailed from Deal, under the command of Sir George Byng and lord Darnley, and appeared off the coast in the vicinity of Dunkirk.

In the midst of these preparations the customary notice was submitted to parliament. On the 4th of March, Mr. Boyle, secretary of state, imparted to the house of commons, by order of the queen, the intelligence received from general Cadogan, relative to the french preparations at Dunkirk. He stated that the pretended prince of Wales was arrived with 15 battalions, ready to embark, that the duke of Berwick was expected, and that the object of the expedition was Scotland, where they had many friends, and hoped to surprise the castle of Edinburgh. He at the same time announced the preparations at Ostend, and gave notice that the States General were anxious and willing to assist the queen, with their whole disposable force, by land and sea. *

These reports of a projected invasion, which had been hitherto slightly treated by the tories, and represented as a mere political trick to excite

* Mr. Vernon to the duke of Shrewsbury, March 4.

alarm, were received with the deepest sensation by the commons. All party distinctions seemed to be forgotten, in the general anxiety to rally round the throne. An address of thanks was instantly drawn up, and being approved, was conveyed to the upper house by lord Hertford, who returned with the unanimous sanction of the peers.

After thanking the queen for her communications, and gratefully acknowledging the zeal of the dutch, the two houses expressed their resolution to assist her majesty with their lives and fortunes, in the maintenance of her undoubted right to the crown, against the pretended prince of Wales, and all her enemies, both at home and abroad. They praised the zeal and activity which had been manifested, both in the naval and military departments, and requested her majesty, not only to execute the laws against papists and non-jurors, but to secure the arms and persons of those who were suspected. At the close of their address, they expressed sentiments worthy of the british nation.

"As we doubt not, but by the blessing of God upon the continuance of your majesty's care, your enemies will be put to confusion, so we readily embrace this opportunity to shew to your majesty and the whole world, that no attempts of this kind shall deter us from supporting your majesty in the vigorous prosecution of the present war against France, until the monarchy of Spain be restored to the house of Austria, and your majesty have the glory to complete the recovery of the liberties of Europe."

The two houses proved that these loyal declar-

ations were not empty professions. They passed a bill, requiring all persons to take the oath of abjuration, under pain of being treated as convicted recusants, suspended the Habeas Corpus act, and proclaimed the pretender and his adherents traitors and rebels. They consented that the 5000 men, who were ready for embarkation at Ostend, should be immediately brought from the coast of Flanders, and voted supplies commensurate with the exigency of the moment.

The activity of government corresponded with the zeal of the legislature. Many avowed or suspected jacobites were arrested, and after a short confinement in different places, conveyed to London. Among the most distinguished was the duke of Hamilton *, who had repaired to England, under the plea of domestic business, and was taken into custody by a state-messenger, in his passage through Lancashire. He was permitted to remain some days at a seat in Staffordshire, and finally transferred to the Tower.

In the midst of the general suspense and anxiety, the troops from abroad landed at Tynemouth, and with the forces collected in the country, prepared to advance, by rapid marches, to the scene of danger. But long before they could reach their destination, the storm, which had menaced the british shores was dissipated, by the vigilance and enterprise of the navy.

The unexpected apparition of a powerful squadron before Dunkirk confounded the french court,

* The best account of this proceeding is found in Lockhart's State Papers, v. i. p. 217.

who had fondly imagined that the departure of the Lisbon fleet had left the coasts defenceless. Fear and indecision succeeded to hope and confidence, and after a considerable delay, occupied by orders and counter-orders, advantage was taken of a gale, which drove the english fleet off its station, to give the signal for sailing. Their destination was, however, suspected, and when they reached the Frith of Forth, they were astonished to find Sir George Byng, with his squadron, waiting their arrival. Discouraged by the appearance of this superior force, and disappointed of the expected co-operation from the rebels, they changed their plan, and beat round the north of Scotland, to land at Inverness, where they expected an insurrection in their favour, among the highland clans. But they were driven out to sea by tempestuous winds, and after becoming the sport of the elements for the space of a month, deemed themselves fortunate in effecting their return to Dunkirk, though with the loss of 4000 men, from hardship and sickness. One of the ships, the Salisbury, was captured, having on board lord Griffin, the two sons of the earl of Midleton, and colonel Warcope, who were committed to the Tower. The vigilance of government prevented the adherents of the pretender from exciting disturbances; and the only effect produced by the attempt was, a temporary run on the bank of England, which was obviated by the prudence of the lord treasurer, and the liberal assistance of the nobility and monied men, among whom we distinguish the names of Marlborough,

Somerset, Newcastle, and Godolphin, as well as of the principal merchants in the city. *

On the defeat of the intended invasion, the services of Marlborough and Godolphin received due praise from the nation at large, one for his judicious disposition of the military force, and the other for the vigour and wisdom of the internal government.

The spirited address presented by the commons to the queen, conveys full testimony to their merits, and a censure no less strong on " those persons, who, by endeavouring to create divisions and animosities, lessen the just esteem which your majesty entertains for those who have so eminently, and in so distinguished a manner, commanded your armies, and managed your treasure, to the honour and glory of your majesty abroad, and the entire satisfaction of your people at home."

The language of the peers, on the contrary, manifested the spirit of jealousy and suspicion, which the whig chiefs still fostered against the general and treasurer, and proved that they were no less eager to recommend the merits of their own party to the royal notice, than to concur in the applause of the nation. After congratulating the queen on the disappointment of the enemy, and professing their zeal and loyalty, they held up to her detestation, those who had recently endeavoured to misrepresent the actions of her best and most faithful subjects, and conjured her

* Tindal, and the other historians. — History of Europe for 1708.— Lockhart's Papers, v. i. which contain much interesting information on this subject. — Journals of the Lords and Commons.

to exclude them in future from her presence. They concluded with expressing their opinion, that her majesty should principally depend upon, and encourage those who had been, ever since the Revolution, most steady and firm to the interest of the late king, and of her majesty, during her happy reign.

The reply of the queen is conveyed in language which she had never before employed, and was ill in unison with her private sentiments. Instead of the cautious silence, which she had hitherto maintained, respecting the Revolution, or its abettors, she now adopted the style in which she had been addressed. After deprecating party distinctions, she declared her obligation "to place her chief dependence on those who had given such repeated proofs of the greatest warmth and concern, for the support of the Revolution, the security of her own person, and of the protestant succession."

In the speech with which she closed the session, she assumed a still more decisive tone. After thanking the parliament for their liberal and timely supplies, she observed, "I take these to be such undeniable proofs of your zeal and affection to my service, as must convince every body of your doing me the justice to believe, that all which is dear to you is perfectly safe under my government, and must be irrecoverably lost, if ever the designs of *a popish pretender, bred up in the principles of the most arbitrary government, should take place.*" *

Such expressions sufficiently display the fear which the queen conceived of the whigs, as well

* Journals.

as the necessity she felt of yielding to the impulse of public opinion; and may serve as a proof of the change, which recent events had produced in the character of the administration. This memorable answer closed the business of the session; for the parliament was prorogued the same day, and on the 15th of April dissolved, a short time before it would have expired, by the lapse of three years.

We cannot close our narrative of these transactions, without adverting to an incident, which seems to have arisen out of the struggle for the dismission of Harley; and which, though of minor importance in itself, materially affected the feelings and interest of the duke of Marlborough.

Mortified at the increasing influence which Mrs. Masham appeared to enjoy, the duchess continually persecuted the queen with reproaches and remonstrances, both in person and by letter. * Finding that her ill-judged efforts, instead of lessening, increased the affection of the queen for the new favourite, she adopted the resolution of withdrawing from court. She waited on her royal mistress, a few days before the dismission of Harley, and after a preamble, which was frequently interrupted by the violence of her emotions, she added, "As lord Marlborough is now about to be forced from your majesty's service, I cannot, in honour, remain any longer at court." She then expatiated, as usual, on her own services, and on the friendship which the queen had condescended to entertain for her; and as a recompence, concluded with

* One of these indecorous altercations is recorded by the duchess in her Conduct, p. 244.

requesting permission to resign her offices in favour of her two elder daughters, who from their rank, alliance, and character, were well calculated to merit such a favour.

After listening with seeming embarrassment to this long appeal, the queen evaded compliance, by affecting much kindness, and repeating, "you and I must never part." The duchess, however, was not diverted from her purpose, and renewed her solicitations, that if circumstances should render her retreat necessary, her majesty would comply with this request. The queen, pressed by her importunities, and intimidated by the presence of a person, whom she equally feared and disliked, renewed the declaration, "that they should never part." But added, should that even be the case, she would transfer the offices to two of her daughters; and did not hesitate to bind that promise by a solemn asseveration. The duchess took her leave, kissing the queen's hand; and after the duke and Godolphin had succeeded in extorting the dismission of Harley, the queen yielded to her continued applications, by confirming in writing, the promise which had been verbally given. Still, however, the duchess had reason to feel that her attendance was unwelcome; and on the departure of her husband to the continent, she wrote a letter, expressing her resolution not to incommode the queen by her presence; but artfully recalled to recollection the promise which she had before extorted. *

* From a narrative manuscript of the duchess, beginning — "Some days before my lord Marlborough, &c." — Conduct, p. 254.

"*March* 31. — Madam; upon lord Marlborough's going into Holland, I believe your majesty will neither be surprised nor displeased, to hear I am gone into the country, since by your very hard and uncommon usage of me, you have convinced all sorts of people, as well as myself, that nothing would be so uneasy to you as my near attendance. Upon this account, I thought it might not be improper, at my going into the country, to acquaint your majesty, that even while lord Marlborough continues in your service, as well as when he finds himself obliged to leave it, if your majesty thinks fit to dispose of my employments, according to the solemn assurances you have been pleased to give me, you shall meet with all the submission and acknowledgments imaginable." *

It is needless to expatiate on the disgust which this ill-timed application, and imprudent importunity produced. The queen and the duchess never met, without sullen silence, or bitter reproaches; and never wrote without ironical apologies, or contemptuous taunts. The effects of these female jars, arising from offended dignity on one hand, and disappointed ambition on the other, may be traced throughout the series of correspondence, and produced the most sinister effects on the administration of public affairs, by the perplexities into which they perpetually threw both the treasurer and general.

* From a copy in the hand-writing of the duchess.

CHAPTER 66.

1708.

Arrival of Marlborough at the Hague.—Meets Eugene.—Political and military arrangements.—Plan of the campaign.—Continuation of the feuds in the british cabinet, relative to the promotion of lord Somers.—Instances for Marlborough's return to England.—Obstacles to the intended plan of operations.—Journey of Marlborough to Hanover, to obviate the objections of the elector.—His return to the Hague.—Querulous complaints of his friends, on his refusal to revisit England.—Correspondence on this subject.

HOWEVER anxious to mature the preparations for the ensuing campaign, and to join Eugene, who was impatiently expecting him at the Hague, Marlborough could not quit England, until the danger of invasion had ceased. He therefore took his departure on the 29th of March, O. S., before the close of the session, and after a speedy passage, reached the coast of Holland. He proceeded without delay, in an open boat, to the Brill, and on the morning of the second of April, appeared at the Hague.

To Secretary Boyle.

"You will have heard by last post how well I was in making my passage hither, the next night after I left London. Since my arrival, my time

has been wholly taken up in concerting with the prince of Savoy, and the generals and ministers. Yesterday we had a conference with the States General, when the prince communicated to us two projects, for the operations on the Rhine, and Moselle. The latter seems to be most relished; but to put it in execution, the prince requires 80,000 men for the army in the Low Countries, which you may believe the States are not inclined to give. I must own, that according to the present juncture, we should be in a situation to act offensively on this side, that we may have an eye at the same time to our affairs in England, to deter the enemy from the thoughts of another invasion, which they might be inclined to, if we should weaken ourselves too much in Flanders. But the States are of opinion that the best way of hindering it, would be to keep a good squadron constantly before Dunkirk.

" The prince has insinuated to me, that he should be glad if I could accompany him to Hanover, to concert with the elector; but I shall excuse myself, that I may get five or six days to come over, and inform the queen fully of the measures that shall have been taken, to which end I keep the yacht and convoy on this side."

With Eugene, Marlborough entered into a confidential communication on the state of foreign affairs, and the views of his sovereign. In these preliminary discussions, two points, in particular, occupied his attention, namely, the demands of the emperor, for the levy-money of the troops whom

he had engaged to furnish; and the claims of the duke of Savoy on the austrian court.

On the first head, Marlborough referred the discussion to the treasurer and the british cabinet, from a reluctance to acquiesce in demands, which he deemed exorbitant, and an unwillingness to offend the emperor by a direct refusal.

The adjustment of the second point was still more delicate; for the duke of Savoy, on one hand, demanded the immediate fulfilment of the treaty concluded in 1703, by which he was to receive part of the Montferrat, forfeited by the duke of Mantua, while the emperor delayed the investiture, under the pretence that the cession of the said territory would infringe the rights of the house of Loraine. Marlborough was particularly anxious to effect an accommodation, because the success of the campaign in Italy depended on the union of the two courts; and because his friends in England, especially the treasurer, made the conduct of the emperor, the theme of perpetual invective, and censured him for continuing to rely on a prince, whose engagements had been so seldom fulfilled. With this view, Marlborough dispatched general Palmes to Vienna and Turin; but his principal hopes of success rested on the mediation and influence of Eugene.

The result of their amicable negotiation was highly satisfactory. From Eugene he received assurances, that the emperor was gratified by the resolution of parliament to continue the war, till the whole monarchy of Spain was restored to the house of Austria, and would faithfully redeem the

pledges he had repeatedly given, in exerting his whole strength to promote the objects of the Grand Alliance. That the army on the Rhine should be increased to the amount of 20,000 men, with every requisite for action, by the middle of May; and that a succour of 12,000 men should be furnished for the service of Italy, to be placed under the sole direction of the duke of Savoy. That although he could not comply with the instances of the queen and parliament, by sending Eugene into Spain, he would dispatch a considerable body of his troops to Catalonia, and consign the command to count Staremberg, one of his most able generals. Finally, that he would assist in the formation of an army on the Moselle, which, under the direction of Eugene, should act in any quarter, where it could be employed with the best effect. The prince also pledged himself for the compliance of his imperial master, with the demands of the duke of Savoy.

After accomplishing these arrangements, Marlborough and Eugene proceeded to mature the plan for the campaign, of which they had previously concerted the outlines, as appears from a letter of Eugene to the duke, dated St. Laurent, August 31. 1707.

"I have received your highness's letter of July 30th, by brigadier Palmes. He departs, informed of the state of affairs here, and of my opinion respecting the war in this country, and in other parts. But should it be resolved to remain here on the defensive, we ought to have a body, which may be withdrawn to form a second army on the

Moselle, with some detachments from our other armies, and to act in Germany or Flanders, according as circumstances require. Above all things, magazines and artillery must be provided, without which, the troops will be useless. In this case, the army in Spain must be put in a condition to want no succours, and to support itself. I entreat you to take care that none may discover these designs. In the project for this country, I only speak of the valleys of Barcelonetta and Aosta; but if we could take Susa before winter, an army might act by Mont Cenis, or perhaps by Mont Genevre, which is the only passage practicable for artillery.

" This project appears vast; but if two armies were ready in May, it would not be impossible, particularly if those who were charged with the execution were not obliged to govern themselves according to the ridiculous judgments of the ignorant, as in such enterprises we attempt all that is possible; and yet the success is always uncertain. Those who have commanded armies know this by fatal experience.

" I end with the affairs of Spain. The king presses me continually for succours from Vienna, of which he is in want. I am overwhelmed with projects, which are referred to Holland and England, and of which general Palmes has no knowledge. It is now September. Neither fleet or troops have any orders; for what Lescheraine has communicated amounts to nothing. I wish, therefore, to know what is intended, that I may apprise the king; and what measures are to be taken, for

on those depend also the dispositions for the ensuing campaign." *

In arranging this extensive design, the two generals admitted to their deliberations pensionary Heinsius, of whose secresy and zeal they were well assured. With him they settled two projects, one real, the other ostensible. The purport of the ostensible project was, to form two armies, one in the Netherlands, under Marlborough, the other on the Moselle, under Eugene, as if they intended to resume the design of penetrating through Loraine, which had been baffled in 1705. The real project was, to unite these two armies by a rapid march, and give battle to the french in the Netherlands, before they could be joined by reinforcements drawn from distant quarters. The army on the Moselle was to be principally formed of imperialists, palatines, saxons, and hessians, who had before served on the Upper Rhine; and, consequently, the german army which had hitherto acted with little effect, was to be reduced to the defensive.

The ostensible project was communicated to the deputies of the States on the 12th of April, and the two generals earnestly recommended the preparatory measures, requisite for the execution of their secret plan. Several other conferences were successively held, to mature their arrangements, and the acquiescence of the dutch government was at length obtained.

This disposition of force was more necessary, in

* Translation from the original french.

consequence of the intentions manifested by the french, to recover their losses in the Netherlands. For this purpose they had drawn troops from the most distant parts, even from Spain and Italy; and the choice of the generals indicated the quarter which was to be the prominent theatre of action. For the command in Dauphiné was given to marshal Villars; that on the Upper Rhine to the elector of Bavaria, and marshal Berwick; and the direction of the war in the Netherlands was entrusted to the duke of Burgundy, who was expected to reap the laurels of victory under the skilful guidance of Vendome.

While Marlborough was employed in arranging military operations, the increasing feuds in the british court called forth his serious attention; for he had scarcely reached the Hague before the disputes, which had raged in the preceding year, broke out with redoubled fury. It was evident that the forced accommodation, which had recently taken place with the whigs, would only prove the germ of new contentions.

The appointments of Cowper and Sunderland, and the nomination of Boyle, in the room of Harley, had not sufficiently gratified the ambition of the rising party; and they now endeavoured to force the rest of their chiefs into the royal service. They first brought forward lord Somers, whose mildness of character, and steady attachment to the principles of the Revolution, had won the respect, even of his rivals, and who was personally esteemed both by Marlborough and Godolphin.

Somers had hitherto announced a resolution

never to accept any office of state, while Harley continued in the administration; and that objection being now removed, the preceding changes were considered as propitious to his promotion, which was made by the whigs an indispensable condition of their support. They hoped this object would encounter the less obstruction, from the general estimation in which Somers was held, as well as from the particular regard entertained for him by the two ministers. Before the departure of Marlborough, the lord treasurer, with his usual delicacy, was endeavouring to render the change palatable to the queen; and Somers was designated for the office of president of the council, which was held by the earl of Pembroke, in conjunction with the viceroyalty of Ireland. The treasurer found, however, so much repugnance on her part, and so much impatience on the side of the whigs, that he wrote, in the most pressing terms, to hasten the temporary return of Marlborough to England, as soon as his military occupations would permit, for the sake of settling this political dispute.

"*Newmarket, April 5.*–16. — I had the satisfaction to receive here last night the favour of yours of the 31st of March, from the Hague, and of prince Eugene having been there before you. I hope your affairs on that side will soon be dispatched, because it is plain those on this side will not be so without your assistance; and yet I am not in despair, but your being one fortnight here would obtain what is reasonable to be done, and set things upon a tolerable foot, which otherwise

are like to come to great extremities next winter, in the opinion of your humble servant."

The duchess was equally pressing for the return of her husband, and the whigs, through their organ, lord Sunderland, expressed their hopes that his presence would extort the consent of the queen to their just demands.

Lord Sunderland to the Duchess of Marlborough.

" *Whitehall, April* 6.–17. — A dutch mail came in this morning, by which we had reason to hope that lord Marlborough is determined to return for some days. I can't but rejoice extremely at it, because I think it is of the last consequence to every thing here; and, besides, will bring you back to us again, which I heartily wish, not only for the satisfaction it would be to all friends; but because I am more and more convinced of what I took the liberty of saying to you, before you went out of town, that I am sure your absenting yourself for any long time, is just doing what yours and all our enemies desire, and proclaiming to the whole world what they, by all arts, endeavour to make people believe. Whereas till every thing breaks to pieces, which I hope will not be yet, sure it would be right to endeavour to deceive the world, at least in this point. I beg pardon for touching on this subject, which I know is not agreeable to you; but I think it is of so much consequence, that I could not help doing it.

" The letters of to-day tell us the prince of Wales is gone back to St. Germains, so that there is an end of that danger, at least for this year; and it is not to be imagined the consternation they

are in at Paris upon this disappointment. It does really look as if they put their whole hopes upon this single expedition; and it has raised as much the spirits of all our friends in Holland.

"As to our elections here at home, by the nicest calculation that can be made, they will be very considerably better in this parliament; so that if all this will not keep you from the spleen, I don't know what will. I am sure nothing can keep us from it, but your coming back again among your friends."

Marlborough promised to comply with these instances, and made preparations for his immediate departure, as soon as he had completed his military dispositions. He had scarcely, however, adopted his resolution, before he was assailed by remonstrances from the States, who were apprehensive lest he might be detained in England by contrary winds, and expatiated on the injury which would arise from his absence, to the interest of the confederacy. They even applied to the queen, repeating their instances against his departure.

The timidity of the republic would not, however, have prevailed, had he not been swayed by difficulties of another kind. To execute the plan which he had concerted with Eugene, it was necessary to obtain the co-operation of the german princes, who manifested the utmost reluctance in sending their troops into the field.

The elector palatine refused to supply his contingent, unless the emperor would restore the territorial possessions and honours, which had been wrested from his family at the peace of West-

phalia, and conferred on the bavarian line. Similar difficulties were raised by the landgrave of Hesse, and king Augustus, as elector of Saxony; but the greatest arose from the elector of Hanover, who evinced unusual eagerness to command a powerful army, and expressed the utmost indignation at the slightest hint of a diminution of his forces.

Eugene engaged to negotiate with the palatine and Saxon electors, and the landgrave, but knowing that he was himself obnoxious to the elector of Hanover, he earnestly entreated Marlborough to join him at that court, in the full confidence that his influence could alone prevail. The necessity of the case was so urgent, that Marlborough, though reluctantly, yielded to the arguments of his friend, and relinquished his design of returning to England. He announced this change in a letter to secretary Boyle.

"*April* 20, *N. S.* — Prince Eugene, who is gone to Dusseldorp, to concert with the elector palatine, being very pressing with me to meet him again at Hanover, to persuade the elector to come into the measures for the operations of the campaign, and the States having written by this post to pray the queen to dispense with my return to England; I hope her majesty will not disapprove my setting out the beginning of next week for Hanover, where I purpose to continue only forty-eight hours, and to be here again in twelve days." *

He did not linger at the Hague after the depar-

* State Paper Office.

ture of Eugene, but proceeded to Hanover, where he arrived on the 26th. His first letter to secretary Boyle contains a brief account of his journey and proceedings.

"*Hanover, April 27.* — After I writ to you on Monday, I made such diligence, that I arrived here yesterday in the evening. I took up the count de Rechteren * at his house on the road, and prince Eugene joined us at the last stage. We had at night an audience of the elector, electress, and electoral prince. To-day we have begun our conferences with the ministers: what the result may be, will appear from the next, which it is likely will be from the Hague, intending to leave this place Sunday or Monday."

On reaching Hanover, the two generals were equally concerned and surprised to find that the elector had conceived a jealousy of the plans in agitation, and was determined not to resume the command on the Rhine. He in particular did not conceal his aversion to Eugene, whom he considered as sent to usurp those laurels which he himself had hoped to acquire. During their stay of two days at Hanover, they soothed his jealousy, or at least overcame his repugnance; and obtained his consent for the formation of a separate army on the Moselle. But he was not acquainted with the real project, and was left to suppose that Eugene might either act on the Moselle, or repair to the Rhine, as circumstances required. He was also gratified with 2000 imperial horse, intended for Eugene, and was promised a further reinforce-

* Envoy from the States General, formerly baron d'Almelo.

ment of 5000 men from the Netherlands. A pledge was given on the part of the emperor, to obviate the objections which had hitherto prevented the formal establishment of the new electorate in the house of Hanover.

Here the two great commanders separated. Having already gratified the elector palatine, and the landgrave of Hesse, by announcing the acquiescence of the emperor in their demands, Eugene proceeded to Dresden, where he was equally successful with king Augustus. From thence he took the route to Vienna, to accelerate the preparations for the ensuing campaign, and to effect an accommodation with the court of Turin.

Marlborough returned to the Hague, which place he reached on the 2d of May. After communicating to the States the result of his negotiations, and concerting the measures for opening the campaign, he proceeded to join the army, which was assembling in the vicinity of Brussels.

At the Hague, he found letters from Godolphin and the duchess, filled with reproaches for his refusal to repair to England.

From Lord Godolphin.

" *Newmarket, April* 8.–19. — I have the favour of yours of the 13th, and am very sorry you have so little time to yourself, while I am so idle as to be here. One of my best reasons for it was, the hopes I have to meet you at London at my return thither. But I must own your letter leaves that matter very uncertain, since you seem to think that the enemy's forming a small camp, near Ypres, will oblige you to go to Flanders. For my part, I

cannot see much ground to apprehend the french preparations there, or any where, since their disappointment in Scotland, which seems to have very much disordered all their measures.

" I entirely dislike all prince Eugene's projects, even if they should succeed; for considering how the court of Vienna used us as soon as they were masters in Italy, it would surely be very unadvised to put it into their power to do the same again, by making them masters again upon the Rhine and Moselle, and neglecting the opportunity of our own advantages nearer home, of which our people will be much more sensible. I wish, therefore, most earnestly, that your notion may prevail with prince Eugene, but not at the price of those two electors *; because that could not fail of being called here a *pretext* not to return into England, our world not being much better natured than when you left it."

" *Sunday night, April* 11.–22. — The wind had been so fair all the while I was at Newmarket, that at my return from thence on Sunday, I was not out of hopes to have found you here; but instead of that you don't think of coming, which I must own is a great mortification to me; for I had much set my heart upon the hopes of seeing you, and endeavouring once more to have set Mrs. Morley's affairs upon a right foot; and I really think it would be very hard for her to have resisted the plain necessity with which our arguments might have been enforced at this time. I say this chiefly because I really believe one of your chief reasons for your

* Palatine and Hanover.

not making use of the fair wind that presented, was, your apprehension that your being here would not be able to do any good; for you must give me leave to say, that I cannot think you will go to Hanover, or that you will think yourself there is any occasion at present for your going to Flanders.

"I am very sorry for what prince Eugene tells you of the little to be expected from the duke of Savoy. I confess I had great hopes that something might be done with effect on that side, where there seems to be the least preparation for any resistance. * * * * * *

"A good many people seem to be uneasy here, at your sending for three regiments, but I hope it will soon be over, if the diligence of lieutenant-general Erle, joined to the great allowances which I have made at the treasury, for restoring the Almanza regiments, can be sufficient to have them completed by midsummer, the time assigned for that purpose. He goes to-morrow to Northampton, to review such of the troops as are upon their return from the frontiers of Scotland."

"*April* 13.–24.—Since my former letter of the 12th, the letters of the 20th are arrived from Holland, and to my great surprise I have none from you, nor had lady Marlborough received hers when I sent this morning; so I conclude some accident must have happened to her letters and mine. By yours to Mr. Boyle, I am very sorry to find you resolve to go to Hanover. It will be looked upon here as a very full conviction, that any place is more agreeable than England; and I am afraid the pains you take in going thither can have no

other effect, than to increase the elector of Hanover's jealousy of prince Eugene, and render him still fuller of difficulties and irresolution."

"*April* 16.–27. — In my last I acknowledged yours of the 20th with the account from prince Eugene of king Augustus's proposals to the emperor, in which matter the queen does fully agree with your opinions at the Hague.

"As to what is said to you by those of Amsterdam, concerning their *barrier*, we in England shall be easy I believe in giving them any satisfaction about that matter with these two conditions: — 1st, that Ostend remain in the hands of Spain; and, secondly, that Dunkirk be demolished. I think we are undone whenever we consent to any peace, without these two articles.

"I wish your next letters from Hanover may give us a good account of your having had success there, but I must own it is more than I expect."

The replies of Marlborough shew how deeply his feelings were wounded by these querulous reproaches.

To the Duchess.

"*Hague, May* 3. — At my return last night at this place I had the pleasure of receiving yours of the 5th and 6th. I am very sorry, and do assure you that it was never my intention that any letter of mine should give uneasiness to you; but the contrary, for I can have no content, if I must live without your esteem and love. The letter writ by the States * proceeded from my positively refusing

* Alluding to the letter written by the States to the queen, against his return to England.

of them, and not from any desire of not returning. I must own to you, that I have never been one day since I left England without very dismal thoughts; for I am very much of your opinion, that the queen's inclinations are such, that the whigs must be angry, and, consequently, the lord treasurer and I not only uneasy, but unsafe. All this I could bear if I could be so happy as to gain your love and esteem; for however unhappy my passion and temper may make you, when I have time to recollect, I never have any thought but what is full of kindness for you.

" The hope you have of the good instructions that have been given to the duke of * Devonshire, in order to persuade the queen, is what I am afraid will signify very little, since the power and inclinations of Mrs. Masham will be opposite. For my own part, I shall this campaign do my utmost for the good of the common cause, and the queen's service, after which, I should, from my soul, be glad of being excused from any farther service. I shall leave this place in two or three days, and shall take care to have your letters follow me to Brussels.

" The inclosed paper you sent me, I should think would do good."

To Lord Godolphin.

" *Hague, May* 3.—At my return here last night, I had the happiness of your three letters of the 3d, 5th, and 8th, by which I am sensible of your kind desires for my return. I am now thoroughly con-

* He here alludes to the proposal for admitting lord Somers into the council, without an office. — See the next chapter.

vinced, if I had avoided being at Hanover, at the same time with prince Eugene, not only the project made at the Hague had miscarried, but also these people would have laid the fault at my door.

" After a very great deal of uneasiness, the elector has consented to the project for three armies; but we have been obliged to leave on the Rhine two imperial regiments, more than we designed, so that prince Eugene will have 2000 horse less on the Moselle; and as for the joining the two armies, we thought it best not to acquaint the elector with it, so that I expect when that is put in execution, he will be very angry; but since the good of the campaign depends upon it, I know no remedy but patience.

" The burgomasters of Amsterdam were above two hours with me this morning, to convince me of the necessity of a sudden peace. I need not repeat you their reasons, the greatest part of them were such as you have heard formerly from Mr. Buys. That which gave me the greatest surprise was, that they hoped the queen would come into measures with them for the proposing peace to France, in case France should make none to them by the month of July. This from the most zealous part of the dutch has very much alarmed me. The next thing they desired was, that the queen would be pleased to lose no time in giving her orders for beginning a treaty for their barrier; and that they on their side were willing to take any measure her majesty should propose to take, for the security of the union, and the protestant succession. They

insist on the same barrier they formerly proposed, with what they call an expedient, which is, that half the garrison of Ostend might be spaniards. They make difficulty of giving me this in writing, but at last, I believe, they will do it. In the mean time, I beg you will acquaint the queen, that I may know her pleasure. Though they pressed me very much to acquaint you by this post, at the same time they were very earnest that you should let nobody know it but her majesty.

"Not only in this conversation, but in that which I had with them before I went to Hanover, I find they think the tories are in the interest of 54, and that the court is divided. This opinion may prove very fatal to the queen's interest. Every thing has so ill a prospect, that I should despair, were it not for the hopes that God will give me, this campaign, an opportunity of serving the queen and common cause.

"Before I left England, I did speak to the queen, that in this promotion the earl of Rivers might have a commission of general of the horse, he being the only lieut.-general of the last war. If her majesty pleases, I think it reasonable that his commission should be dated from the time he was sent for Portugal.

* * * * * * *

"I own to you that I expect no good nature from my dear countrymen; but I beg that justice and friendship of you to believe, that I could no ways avoid my journey to Hanover, without hazarding the project we have made for this campaign."

To Lord Sunderland.

" *Hague, May* 4. — My lord; at my arrival here last night, I had the favour of yours of the 6th. I am of your opinion, that the proposal from the court of Vienna for levy money, is very unreasonable. I also agree with you that it will be impossible for those that are thought to have the credit, to be able to do her majesty or their country any service. For my own part, I shall endeavour to do my duty this campaign, after which, I should be glad to see my place well filled, and that for the remaining part of my life I might have a little quiet, and be sometimes with my children. You will see by Mr. secretary Boyle's letter what we have done at Hanover. I shall leave this place on Monday, in order to take the field, as soon as there is any grass, the spring being very backward. My kind love to lady Sunderland, and be assured that I am tenderly yours, &c."

To Lord Godolphin.

" *May* 6. * * * * The pensioner's sickness hinders me from seeing him, but I have pressed M. Fagel, the greffier, that their ships might be hastened to you. Yesterday's letters from Paris assure us, that the duke of Burgundy is to command in Flanders, and that they are to have a superiority of 30,000 men, which I think is impossible. But if they send him, they think themselves strong enough to act offensively, by which we may have an action. Those who are angry at the coming over of the three battalions, do not know that they are part of our 20,000 men, as also the regiment of Raby. But I am so sensible of some people's

being glad to find fault, that I am quite weary of serving; for though I give myself no rest, and ruin my constitution, I cannot please without doing impossibilities.

" I shall write to my brother George, as you desire.

* * * * * * * * *

" I go from hence to-morrow morning, but shall not be at Brussels till Thursday, being resolved to go by Ghent, to give the necessary orders for the english. The recruit horses not being come, will make it very difficult for the english horse to take the field, at the same time with the rest of the army."

To the Duchess.

" *Hague, May* 6. * * * * I am of your mind, and not that of Mr. Berty's, for Mrs. Masham will not have that preferment, since it must prove her ruin; but I am afraid she will have the power of doing all the mischief that is possible to the queen. There is care taken, by letters writ from England, to persuade these people that the queen has no kindness for you, the lord treasurer, and me. I take this to be the politics of Mr. Harley, for the inducing of these people to a peace, to which, God knows, they are but too much inclined.

" I am to thank you for three of yours, which I received this morning. I should be glad to have your second letter of the queen, that I might be the better able to judge of that fatal correspondence with Mr. Harley, which will prove her ruin. I must own to you that I am of the same mind with your friends, that you cannot oblige

Mrs. Masham more than by being at a distance from the queen. However, I value your quiet and happiness so much, and being almost persuaded that it is next to impossible to change the inclinations of the queen, I would not have you constrain yourself in any thing. I find by yours, that some friends of mine are angry at my not returning. It is most certain if I had not gone to Hanover we should have begun this campaign without any project. God knows how this will succeed, which we have agreed on; but this pleasure we have, that it gives uneasiness in France. Besides this, I own to you, that if I had come, I should not have been able to have done any good with the queen; for till she suffers by the unreasonable advice of Mrs. Masham and Mr. Harley, it will be not in my power to do her any service; so that unless you will have it otherwise, it is my intention to use my endeavours of making it necessary for my staying abroad this next winter. The account of the behaviour of my brother George is unaccountable. I shall be sure to write to him my mind very freely."

CHAPTER 67.

1708.

Increasing aversion of the queen to the whigs.—Their attempt to introduce lord Somers into the privy council without an official situation.—Correspondence on the subject.—Fruitless efforts of Marlborough and Godolphin to overcome her repugnance.—Suspicions against admiral Churchill.—Resentment of the whigs.—Their cabals with the jacobites, to ensure the majority in the elections of Scotland—Foiled by the predominant influence of the court.—Chagrin of Marlborough and Godolphin.—Indignation of the queen against Sunderland, for his agency in the cabal.—New jealousies and clamours of the whigs against the two ministers.—Their threats to revive the invitation of a member of the electoral family.—Intrigues and influence of the duke of Somerset.

The state of parties and of the cabinet fully justified the concern which the friends of Marlborough expressed at his unexpected journey to Hanover.

The antipathy of the queen to the whigs in general, returning with redoubled force, she withheld her countenance even from those who had rendered her the most essential services. Notwithstanding the merits of Sir George Byng, in defeating the recent invasion, her aversion to his party principles so far overcame her gratitude, that she scarcely deigned to treat him with the attentions due to his rank.

"Sir George Byng," observes the treasurer, in a letter, dated April 23, to Marlborough, "is come to town, but has not yet had that countenance shewn him, which either his past diligence, or the hopes of his future behaviour, in this summer's service, might naturally lead him to expect. Those who have most credit with Mrs. Morley, do him all the ill offices imaginable. Mr. Montgomery has taken some pains to change this temper, and to reconcile them, but I am not certain what will be the effect of it. This I am sure of, that if these prejudices are not to be cured, the advices they occasion will ruin the service, and those that give them. In a word, we must hope you will do miracles abroad, and afterwards, that those may produce yet greater miracles at home."

From Lord Godolphin.

"*April* 19.–30. * * * * Mrs. Morley continues so very difficult to do any thing that is for herself, that it puts us into all the distraction and uneasiness imaginable. I really believe this humour proceeds more from her husband than from herself, and in him it is very much kept up by your brother George, who seemed to me as wrong as possible, when I spoke to him the other day. I spoke so freely and so fully to him, of what we must all expect next winter, and himself in particular, if things were to go on at this rate, that he appeared to be much less resolute, after I had talked awhile to him, and thanked me for speaking so freely. If he did not do this out of cunning, I believe your taking notice to him, that Mr. Montgomery seemed to fear he put Mrs.

Morley upon wrong measures, might possibly have no ill effect; but you are the best judge of this. The vacancies in the prince's council will not be very well filled, and the difficulty of filling the attorney-general's place is as great as that in which you left us, and which still remains as when you left us.

" I have been to-day, with the queen's leave, to see the duke of Hamilton. Mortifications are of use to some tempers. I found him less unreasonable than I expected, but very desirous, however, to be set at liberty, and to be distinguished from the rest of his countrymen."

The whigs, on the other hand, discovering that Godolphin was either unwilling or unable to vanquish the repugnance of the queen; and finding that their endeavours to force their chiefs into the principal offices of state, were offensive to the moderate of all parties, adroitly changed their mode of attack, and confined their demands to a seat for lord Somers in the cabinet council, without any official employment. In this pretension, they expected the queen would readily acquiesce, to evade their farther importunities. They accordingly endeavoured to surprise her into compliance. The dukes of Newcastle and Devonshire, lord privy seal and lord steward, waited on her without any preparatory communication, respectfully but strongly urged the pretensions of lord Somers, and concluded by proposing the modified demand, which it was hoped would obviate all objections. The queen, though surprised, was but too clear-sighted not to perceive that this expedient was

adopted, only the more easily to attain the ulterior purpose, and firmly resisted their importunities. Appealing to the treasurer, she was chagrined to find him an advocate for the proposal, and as a last resource addressed herself to Marlborough. The letters which passed on this occasion will furnish the secret history of the transaction.

From Lord Godolphin.

"*April 22.–May 3.* — Having this safe way of writing to you, by Mr. Durell, I am desirous to tell you, that last night the dukes of Newcastle and Devonshire were with Mrs. Morley, again to press her upon the subject of lord Somers. After she had long defended herself upon the old argument, of not doing a hardship to lord Pembroke, they proposed to her to call him, for the present, to the cabinet council, without any post at all, which being new to her, and unexpected, she was much at a loss what to say. At last she said, she thought it was very unusual, upon which they offered some instances of its being done; and then she said, she thought the cabinet council was full enough already, so they took their leave in much discontent; and she was also very uneasy, being sensible of the disadvantage she should be exposed to by this refusal, since her main argument, upon which she had hitherto insisted, was taken away by it.

"This morning she sent for Mr. Montgomery, to give him an account of this visit, and to complain that she saw there was to be no end of her troubles. He told her that the matter was much changed by this proposal, and that he could

not but think it entirely for her service to accept of it. That it was a very small condescension, if they would be satisfied with it; that it gained her point absolutely, with regard to lord Pembroke; that it would make all her affairs easy at once; and that if Mr. Freeman were in town, he was sure it would be his mind, as much as it was Mr. Montgomery's. She seemed still very uneasy, and very unwilling; but she said, she would write to Mr. Freeman about it, to-night or to-morrow. I hope, therefore, you will make such an answer to her, as this thing may be no longer delayed; for as it stands now, you will give me leave to say, the refusal is of much worse consequence, and exposes her much more than as it stood before.

"If Mr. Freeman has no mind to enter into particulars, why might not he answer in general, that he begs her to comply with Mr. Montgomery's desires, in this affair, who, he is sure, will never propose any thing to her, but what shall be as much for her honour as for her advantage? I shall write to you to-morrow by the post, if there be any occasion."

At the same time the queen's letter reached the duke.

"*Kensington, April 22.–May 3.*—The occasion of my writing to you, at this time, is to give you an account of a visit I had yesterday from lord privy seal and lord steward, in which they proposed my taking lord Somers into the cabinet council, without giving him any employment, since I could not be prevailed upon to make him president, laying a great stress on its being necessary

for my service. Their arguments did not at all convince me of the reasonableness nor the propriety of the thing. But all the answer I made was, that the proposition was a very new thing, and that I thought there were enough of the cabinet council already; that I depended upon their assistance in carrying on my business; and had no thoughts of employing any but those that served me well in the parliament, and *had no leaning to any others*, and would countenance all that served me faithfully. This is the sense of what I said to them; and this morning I gave this account to lord treasurer, who had heard nothing of this matter before, but joined in the two dukes' proposal, using a great many arguments to persuade me to comply with it; and I must own to you, did not convince me any more than what I had heard before on the same subject; though I have a much greater respect for him, than for either of the others, looking upon it to be utter destruction to me to bring lord Somers into my service. And I hope you will not join in soliciting me in this thing, though lord treasurer tells me you will; for it is what I can never consent to.

"You are very happy to be out of the disagreeable and vexatious things that I am more or less continually made uneasy with, which makes me not wonder at your not coming back as you promised. I pray God bless and direct you in every thing, and never let it be in any body's power to do me ill offices with you, but be assured that I am, and will be ever, your faithful servant."

The duke was equally embarrassed and chagrined

by this appeal to his arbitration, and communicates his sentiments to Godolphin, previous to his reply to the queen.

" *May* 8.—I have just now received on the road yours of the 22d, by Durell, and 23d, by the post. I have but time to assure you, that by the next post I shall follow your directions to Mrs. Morley; for if she be obstinate, I think it is a plain declaration to all the world, that you and I have no credit, and that all is governed underhand by Mr. Harley and Mrs. Masham."

" *Ghent, May* 9.—Having been obliged with my own hand to copy my letter to Mrs. Morley, I have but just time to tell you, that I beg that nobody may see the original letter of Mrs. Morley, but Mrs. Freeman, and that you would keep it for me.

" I have inclosed my letter to Mrs. Morley, to Mr. secretary Boyle, so that if she takes no notice, you may let her know that I had writ you word that I had done myself the honour to answer her letter; but I think it would be best not to own the having received a copy. I shall stay here to-morrow, and go the next day to Brussels."

To the Queen.

[In reply to her letter of May 3.]

" Madam; *Ghent, May* 9.

" I had this day, on the road, the honour of your majesty's letter, by Durell; and tho' I have but very little time this post, being obliged to go this evening, I would not defer writing, and begging leave, in a few words, to acquaint you

with my thoughts of your affairs abroad, as well as in England.

" I must begin in observing to your majesty, that the town of Amsterdam, which has always been the most zealous for the carrying on of this war with vigour, has, as your majesty may have seen by my former letters to lord treasurer, pressed me in two conferences, by their burgomaster and pensioner, for the making steps towards a peace, which I think not for the honour or interest of your character. I have reason to believe this change of theirs does not proceed from the apprehensions they have of France, but from what passed in England last winter, and from the continued intelligences they have of your majesty's being resolved to change hands and parties. They being sensible of the fatal consequences this may have in the next parliament, is the true reason of their being earnest to have propositions of peace made this campaign.

" As for England, I do not doubt but care is taken to incline your majesty to believe that the tories will have, this next parliament, a majority in the house of commons. But I beg your majesty to consider, before it is too late, how that is possible, after the attempt that has been made by France for the pretender; and that the greatest part of that party is suspected, either to have known, or at least to have wished success to the attempt. Besides, their continual endeavours to incline the people to a peace, which in the circumstances we are in, can only tend to the lessening your

majesty, and consequently the advancement of the pretender's interest.

" This being the truth, how is it possible, madam, that the honest people of England, who wish well to you, and the carrying on of the war, can be prevailed upon to choose such men, as they believe would ruin all that is dear to them? If what I have the honour to write to your majesty be the truth, for God's sake consider what may be the consequences of refusing the request of the dukes of Newcastle and Devonshire; since it will be a demonstration, not only to them, but to every body, that lord treasurer and I have no credit with your majesty, but that you are guided by the insinuation of Mr. Harley.

" We are assured that the duke of Burgundy is coming to the head of this army, with the king of France's leave, and orders to venture a battle. I shall be so far from avoiding it, that I shall seek it, thinking it absolutely necessary for your service; so that God only knows whether this may not be the last I may have the honour to write to you, which makes me beg with the same earnestness, as if I were sure it were to be my last, that your majesty will let no influence or persuasion hinder you, not only in this, but in all your worldly affairs, to follow the advice and good counsel of lord treasurer, who will never have any thought but what is for your honour and true interest."

To the Duchess.

" *Ghent, May* 9. — I have sent to the lord treasurer the queen's original letter, which I have desired nobody but yourself may see. In it you

will see her positive resolution. Mr. Montgomery will shew you what I have writ to her. I wish it may do good, but I fear all is undone; for our affairs here abroad go every day worse. I stay here to-morrow, and the next day go for Brussels, from whence you shall be sure to hear from me. The writing and copying Mrs. Morley's letter has so tired me, that I can say no more."

"*Brussels, May* 14. — Since my arrival here, I have had yours of the 27th of the last month, and am very sensible of the indiscreet behaviour of my brother. I know not what effect it may have; I have writ my mind freely to him.

"As to what you say of the garter, I think it should not be given till the queen is sensible of the shame it would be to let so worthless a creature as 40 so much as expect it. Not only this, but every thing I hear, puts me very much out of heart, that I expect nothing but confusion. If my letter to the queen has no effect, I hope both the lord treasurer and you will be convinced that I have no credit, and will accordingly take your measures.

"We are in so great want of rain, that I shall be forced to delay the meeting of the army four or five days; besides, the french seem to change their resolutions every day, so that I believe their taking the field will depend on our motions. I was yesterday to wait upon lady Tyrconnel, who I think is grown very old, and her hoarseness much worse than when I saw her last.

"I have been to see the hangings for your apartment and mine; as much as are done of them I think are very fine. I shall not send them over

until the winter, unless you desire them. I should be glad, at your leisure, you would be providing every thing that may be necessary for furnishing these two apartments, and that you would direct Vanbrugh to finish the breaks between the windows, in the great cabinet, with looking-glass; for I am resolved to furnish the rooms with the finest pictures I can get. I shall be impatient for Dr. Hare, since you have written by him."

From Lord Godolphin.

"*April* 29.–*May* 10.—In my last I told you I would write by Mr. Hare, some things more particular than those I would do by the post.

"By yours of the 5th of May, which I have received this day, it is very plain what mischief the divisions of the whigs do even among the people of Holland; and yet the queen is still extremely obstinate, not only in refusing hitherto the proposal about lord Somers, of which I sent you an account by Mr. Durell, but in the matter relating to lord Halifax's brother*, is as inflexible to all that can be said upon that subject, by all those who have access to her, and are concerned that the whigs should not be divided; for it is most certain, nothing is like to be so ruinous to the queen's interests as those divisions, and it is as certain the queen might yet easily prevent it, by a very little compliance with Mr. Montgomery's advice in the matter of lord Somers. But this will not be long in the queen's power, and nothing else in the world can keep the whigs from being

* Sir James Montague, who was candidate for the vacant post of attorney-general.

divided. I hope, therefore, your answer to the letters that went by Mr. Durell, will be very full to that point. But I am afraid we shall not have it so soon as I hoped, since by your letters of this day, I find you designed to leave the Hague last Monday, and I doubt Durell will not have been able to remit it before your going to Flanders.

"But in all your letters pray remember that nothing is like to have better effect with the queen, than to shew the ruin that must unavoidably follow from the divisions among the whigs, which, in my opinion, can only be prevented by the assistance of lord Somers."

From Lord Godolphin.

[In reply to the 9th.]

"*May* 4.–15.—I have received this morning the favour of yours of the 9th from Ghent, with the papers inclosed, in which I shall be sure to obey your commands very exactly.

"Mr. secretary Boyle being obliged to attend the poll to-day for the Westminster election, he sent me the letter you inclosed to him for the queen, to deliver, which I did. But she laid it down upon her table, and would not open it while I staid in the room, by which I am afraid it is not like to have any more effect than some other representations of the same kind have had, from your humble servant, who has endeavoured to lay the consequences of this sort of proceeding so fully before Mrs. Morley, that it is astonishing to find how little they prevail. The original letter which you send me, seems to take it for granted, that what has been desired of Mrs. Morley is no less

than *destruction*, without giving one reason why it is thought so; and when, in truth, the contrary is really that *destruction*, and this the only way to avoid it. A time is coming, when I doubt this will be plainly demonstrated, but it will be too late then to think of a remedy; and when it is known to be so, then I expect to be called upon to try it. I ask your pardon for dwelling so long upon a subject so disagreeable; but if you were in my place, I fancy you would scarce forbear venting yourself sometimes to your friends."

"*Thursday night, May* 6.–17. — As the wind is now, I expect letters from you to-morrow, after which I shall write again by the post. In the mean time I cannot resist this safe opportunity by Mr. Withers, of telling you that though Mr. Montgomery has had two conversations with Mrs. Morley, of two hours apiece, upon the subject of Mr. Freeman's letter, she continues hitherto inflexible on that point, and resists all the plainest reasons and arguments that ever were used in any case whatsoever. At the same time, she renounces and disclaims any talk, or the least commerce with Mr. Harley, at first or second hand; and is positive that she never speaks with any body but the prince, upon any things of that kind. From whence the prince's notions come is not hard to conjecture. Upon the whole, Mr. Montgomery's life is a burthen to him, and like to be so more and more every day. After I have said all this, I know nothing to be done, but to persist upon all occasions in the same language, and hope that time and accidents may open people's eyes, as the danger

comes nearer. But as often as you have any occasion to write, I think you should still continue to represent, that the longer that matter is deferred, the less good effects must certainly attend it."

To the Duchess.

"*May* 14. — I have had the pleasure of your very kind letter of the 4th, and it has been a pleasure to me that you approve of my letter to the queen. If it has the effect I wish, it would encourage me to hope that her business might go gently this next winter, without which we can never get out of this war with honour and safety.

"You are so good as to say you will never write of politics that may be disagreeable to me, if I desire it. You know in friendship and love there must be no constraint; so that I am desirous of knowing what your heart thinks, and must beg of you the justice to believe, that I am very much concerned when you are uneasy.

"When I took leave of lady Tyrconnel, she told me that her jointure in Ireland was in such disorder, that there was an absolute necessity for her going for two or three months, for the better settling of it; and as the climate of Ireland will not permit of her being there the winter, she should begin her journey about ten days hence, and that she did not intend to go to London, but hoped she might have the pleasure of seeing you at St. Alban's. I have offered her all that might be in my power, to make her journey to Holland or England easy, as also that if she cared to stay

at St. Alban's, either at her going or return, you would offer it her with good heart. You will find her face a good deal changed; but in the discourse I have had with her, she seems to be very reasonable and kind.

" I have this morning received yours by lieut. G. Withers, as also that of the 7th by the post. The copies of the several letters you have sent me, I shall not have time to read them till to-morrow, that I go to the army; for in this place I have very little time to myself.

" You will see by the two inclosed letters from Mrs. Morley, both which were writ since she received mine. * I desire that nobody may see them but Mr. Montgomery, for I believe that you and lord treasurer are of opinion with me, that the queen should not know that her letters are sent to any body. If I receive any others, you shall be sure to have them, and you will keep them till my return. You may assure lord treasurer, that on all occasions I have to write to the queen, I shall follow the directions he has given, in his letter by lieut. G. Withers, though I must own to you, that I am thoroughly convinced, that until the queen has suffered for the obstinate opinion she is now in, neither lord treasurer, you, nor I, will be able to prevail, though never so reasonable; but when she shall be sensible of her having been ill advised, she will then readily agree to all that may be advised by us. I pray God it may not be then too late. Whatever happens, if you are kind, I will flatter myself with enjoying some happy years at

* Something omitted in the original.

Blenheim. I am sorry for the death of Mr. Botter, and glad you are going thither, so that the finishing of the inside may be to your *mind*."

From this letter it appears that the treasurer gave credit to the solemn disavowal made by the queen of any intercourse with Mr. Harley; and at the same time, we find the duchess herself asserting that the queen did not consult Mrs. Masham. They therefore joined with the whigs in ascribing her obstinacy to the insinuations of admiral Churchill, through the prince of Denmark, and wounded the feelings of the duke by the heaviest accusations against the conduct of his brother. The duchess, as we have already seen, did not fail to re-echo and exaggerate these complaints. Their suspicions were, however, ill-founded; for the counsels of Harley were still heard with the same complacency, and followed with the same confidence; and Mrs. Masham was also still the agent of his private intercourse with the queen.

The person who was charged with the preceding letter from Godolphin, carried also a reply from the queen, to the remonstrance which Marlborough had written from Ghent, evincing a decided perseverance in her former resolutions.

"*Kensington, May* 6.–17. — I writ to you on Tuesday by the post, by which letter I believe you will expect a longer from me now; but I have been so tired to-day with importunities, that come from the whigs, that I have not spirits left to open my afflicted heart so freely and so fully as I intended; and, therefore, should not have troubled you till to-morrow, by the post, but that having

told lieut.-general Withers I would write by him, I thought he might wonder if I did not do it.

" I can now only tell you, that as to what you mention, and what the lord treasurer told me some time ago, of your being pressed in two conferences for the making steps towards a peace, I am entirely of your opinion, thinking it neither for my honour nor interest; and do assure you, that whatever insinuations my enemies may make to the contrary, I shall never at any time give my consent to a peace, but upon safe and honourable terms. Excuse my answering nothing more of your letter at this time, and be so just to me as not to let any misrepresentations that may be made of me, have any weight with you; for that would be a greater trouble to me than can be expressed. I cannot end without begging you to be very careful of yourself, there being nobody, I am sure, that prays more heartily for your preservation, than her that will live and die most sincerely your humble servant.

" The prince desires his service to you." *

The determination which her obdurate silence, on the great point at issue evinced, is still more fully proved by the communications of the treasurer.

" *April* 30.–*May* 11. * * * I am now to acknowledge the favour of yours of the 5th, 6th, and 8th of May, by which last you refer me to the next post, for your answer to mine by Mr. Durell; but you take no notice of your having received

* This letter, as well as the preceding, is printed from copies preserved by the duchess.

Mrs. Morley's letter, which Mr. Durell also carried to you. I hope your answer to both will be such as may bring that matter to a good end at last, which has hung unreasonably long, considering either what is past, or how much all things to come depend upon a right decision of that affair."

"*May* 11.–22. — Every body here is busy at present about elections and the talk of them. The generality of them are as good, I think, as can be desired, and there is little reason to doubt but the next parliament will be very well inclined to support the war, and, I hope, to do every thing else that is reasonable, if they can have but reasonable encouragement. All seems to turn upon that. Mrs. Morley continues to be very inflexible. I still think that must alter; my only fear is, that it will be too late."

To Lord Godolphin.

"*May* 24.— I have had the favour of yours by lieutenant-general Withers, as also that by the post of the 7th. I am so extremely sensible of the difficulties you meet with, that were it in my power, I should despise any danger to make your life easier; but we must venture both life and quiet for the service of the queen, or all is undone.

"I beg you will read the inclosed letter to the queen. She may depend upon the truth of it; for the author of the inclosed drew the answer to lord Peterborough by the elector of Hanover's orders. What the answer of the electress was, I do not know."

We here insert a translation of the letter from Robethon, to which reference is here made; and

which will serve to shew how zealously the discontented parties exerted themselves in promoting the invitation.

" *Hanover, May* 18. — My lord; I have received Mr. Cardonel's letter from Ghent, but do not answer him, because I prefer addressing myself directly to your highness, in order to inform you, in confidence, that lord Peterborough has written letters, dated April 3.–14. to the elector and electress, for the purpose of representing to them the absolute necessity there is, that some member of their house should go and reside in England, since 5000 french troops have thrown every thing into the utmost consternation, and have been prevented from effecting a descent in Scotland by a mere chance. He speaks much against the ministry of the queen. He says he will come hither this summer, to tell the electress many things, which he cannot venture to write, and will afterwards serve the campaign with the elector. This prince answered him in a manner calculated to prevent him. But as I know what embarrassment this master firebrand would occasion, when seconded by Mr. Scott, I thought proper to communicate the intelligence to your highness, who may perhaps find some means to frustrate this hopeful journey. M. Plessin is going to England, and in passing will see M. Bernstorff and myself, and we will endeavour to give him proper ideas of the business of that country."

From Lord Godolphin.

" *May* 17.–28. — I have had an opportunity to read yours of the 24th to the queen, with the letter

from Hanover. She was not much surprised at it, and seems prepared to expect a great deal of trouble upon that matter, in the winter, but cannot be prevailed with, upon that or any other account, to do what can only, in my opinion, prevent it.

" Lord Halifax tells me that he heard there is a letter in this town (I believe it must be from Scott) which pretends to say, that when Mr. Freeman was lately at the elector of Hanover's, he told the elector that there would be a necessity that something of that kind should be done next winter, because of the extreme perverseness and imbecility of the queen. As ridiculous and preposterous as this story seems, yet I intend to acquaint Mrs. Morley with it; because I think it not unlikely to be an invention of Mr. Harley, who, perhaps, intends to make his use of it."

" *June* 1.–12. * * * * I am now going to give you an account of a conversation this morning, betwixt Mr. Montgomery and Mrs. Morley, which ended with the greatest dissatisfaction possible to both. They have had of late many great contests, upon the subject of lord Halifax's brother, but without any ground gained on either side. This day it held longer than ever. The particulars are both too tedious, and unnecessary to trouble you with them. In short, the obstinacy was unaccountable; and the battle might have lasted till now, if, after the clock had struck three, the prince of Denmark had not thought fit to come in, and look as if he thought it were dinner-time.

" I hope your next will acquaint us with prince

Eugene's arrival, which will be very welcome news to me."

"*May* 26.–*June* 6. — I have had a letter from lord Coningsby, whose judgment and experience, in all the affairs of the parliament, I value very much. He tells me he has had sore eyes, which makes it uneasy to him to write; but in a little time he will send me his thoughts very fully, as to the measures which ought to be taken about parliament; and he adds, that a little more delay will go near to make every thing that is good impossible to be effected. I am entirely in the same mind, but find the queen so perverse and so obstinate, without the least foundation, that nothing in the world is, in my opinion, so unaccountable, nor more dreadful in the consequences of it. I can only say in this case, as I have heard my lord Crofts say, a great while ago, in things of this kind, '*Well, Sirs, God's above.*' "

"*June* 11.–22. — Having no letters from you since my last, nor any thing either from Spain or Portugal, I shall have very little to trouble you with by this post, unless I would give you an account of Mr. Montgomery's complaints, which, indeed, would be endless; and if I can judge rightly of him, I think he would rather choose to sink under the burthen of them himself, than to give you the trouble of them to no purpose, who have so many things of greater consequence to take care of."

Wearied with fruitless representations to the queen, and chagrined by the importunities, and even threats of the whigs, the treasurer made a

tender of his resignation, and announced his resolution in a letter, dated June 13.–24.

" There will be three posts due from you to-morrow; and col. Sutton telling me he designs to go over in the packet-boat of the 18th, I beg to write this letter beforehand, without consequence to those I shall continue to write to you every post; because by so safe a hand, I may venture to write more freely than I am willing to do by the ordinary post.

" The queen continues so averse to every thing Mr. Montgomery can propose, for the support of Mrs. Morley's affairs, that he is tired out of his life at present, and has so little prospect of any tolerable ease in the winter, that he has been obliged once or twice to beg of the queen, either to follow his notions, or to dismiss him, and not let him bear the burthen of other people's follies. But all this hitherto has been to no purpose, and seems to make no manner of impression.

" The case with the prince is little better. He is sometimes uneasy at the apprehensions of what he shall meet with, but unadvisable in what is proper to prevent it; whether from his own temper, or made so by your brother, I cannot judge. But your brother is not, at least seems not to be, without his own uneasiness too, in which I always confirm him when we talk together; and he appears to be upon those occasions very much of my mind; but, however, he has great animosities and partialities, and he either cannot, or will not prevail with the prince to do any good.

" This being the case here at present, and not

very likely to mend before the parliament, I had a mind, by so safe a hand as col. Sutton, to prepare you to expect, that it will not be possible for me to continue as I am till the meeting of parliament, unless it may consist with Mr. Freeman's affairs to see England, and settle measures both with me and the queen before the meeting of parliament, for at least 15 days."

To the Duchess.

"*June* 25. * * * * I have had the happiness of yours of the 8th. The declaration made by the queen to 148 is very surprising. What you write of the duke of Devonshire is, I believe, very true; for I had a letter from him, by which I could see he was dissatisfied with the queen. He is a very honest man, and has had opportunities to know the pains the lord treasurer and I have often taken with the queen, to no purpose, so that I dare say he will do justice to us upon all occasions; for as much as I can observe, he governs himself by reason. I wish I could say so of all our acquaintance. * You are so kind to be in pain at what may happen when prince Eugene comes. Put your trust in God, as I do, and be assured that I think I can't be unhappy as long as you are kind."

"*July* 1. — Tho' we are in the month of July, I am now writing by a fire, the weather being very wet and cold, which I am very sorry for, since it must be very inconvenient to prince Eugene's army, who are now on their march. God knows what we shall be able to do when we join! I am

* Alluding to lord Sunderland.

sure of nothing so much, as that I earnestly long for doing something that may put an end to this war, so that I might have the happiness of being in quiet with you; for were this war ended, nothing should persuade me to torment myself with business and absence.

"I have received yours, which should have been dated the 15th, by which I see the intentions of the whigs. I need make no other answer, than what I have already assured you, that I shall be glad to strengthen them, but never to divide them."

Indignant at the failure of their attempt to introduce Somers into office, or even to procure his admission into the cabinet council, the junta proceeded to still farther extremities, and again hoped to extort by force, what they could not obtain, either by persuasion or importunity. The crisis of the new elections offering a favourable occasion to increase the strength of their party, they did not hesitate to carry into effect, a plan which they had already formed, for the establishment of an interest in parliament, independent of the crown.

In England, where the whig party predominated, their efforts were less marked, and more successful; but in Scotland, where the union had created such a struggle of contending passions, they joined with the tories, and even with the jacobites, to obtain partisans. Sunderland, though minister of the queen, so far forgot the respect due to the sovereign, as to assume the principal management of the cabal; and though he did not venture to use

the royal name, yet by the influence attached to his official situation, he essentially furthered the views of his party.

The whigs combined their influence to obtain the liberation of the suspected jacobites, and particularly of the duke of Hamilton, who was intimately connected by marriage with lord Sunderland.* Newcastle, Wharton, and Halifax became bail for this nobleman, though he was arrested on the strongest presumption of treason. With this tie on his gratitude, strengthened by his jealousy of those who were employed in the administration of Scotland, they sent him back to his native country, on the eve of the new election, and found in him a faithful and active agent, whose connections and influence extended to every rank in society. By his assistance they hoped to secure the majority in the choice of the sixteen peers; and, indeed, gained the aid of the leading jacobites. He was supported by all the interest of the dukes of Roxburgh and Montrose, and other scottish peers, who participated in the sentiments of the whig chiefs. On the other hand, the influence of government was entrusted to the duke of Queensbury, secretary of state for Scotland, who had been recently raised to the english peerage, by the title of the duke of Dover. With him were joined the earls of Mar and Leven, and other persons of note.

For some time the utmost secrecy was observed on both sides, and the duke of Marlborough was unacquainted with the political manœuvres of the

* His first wife was lady Anne Spencer, sister of lord Sunderland.

contending parties, till the crisis of the election approached. In a letter to the duchess, dated May 31st, he imparts the first hints, which he had received, of the intrigue with the duke of Hamilton, and requests her to ask an explanation of lord Sunderland. "I desire," he says, "you would know of lord Sunderland, as from me, if the duke of Hamilton pretends to be chosen, and from what party; for I am sometimes told such extravagancies as are very hard to believe."

Even at the time when the mystery was developed, lord Godolphin, from delicacy, maintained a cautious reserve, and referred him to the information which he might readily draw from the scottish officers in the army.

"*June* 18.–29.—The letters we have to-day from Scotland are full of the feuds and animosities of that country, about the election of peers. I have no mind to trouble you with the particulars, for they would be endless. Besides, since you must needs see very often both the duke of Argyle, lord Stair, and lieutenant-general Ross, you cannot easily avoid hearing what passes on this troublesome occasion."

Marlborough was no sooner acquainted with the unwelcome truth, than he hastened to give a proof of his public sentiments, and attachment to the cause of government, by sending his proxy as baron Aymouth, to the earl of Mar. This authorisation was immediately announced, and produced a considerable impression, as we find from the letters of the scottish jacobites and whigs to lord Sunderland.

Inflamed by mutual rivalry, both parties proceeded to the contest; and the struggle was marked by all the fury of contending passions. But the hopes of the whigs were baffled, by the predominant weight of the crown, and the unexpected defection of the presbyterians, who were alienated by the coalition which the junta had formed with the jacobites. Of the sixteen peers, only six of the whig candidates were * chosen; and of the commons, a considerable majority was returned in favour of government, although many of the officers of the army were gained by the whig party; and lord Orkney, in particular, declared for the list of his brother, the duke of

* It is singular that the duchess in her Vindication takes no notice of the violent struggle in Scotland, nor of the schism between the whigs and the government. Burnet mentions it only incidentally, and as a thing of trifling importance; whereas it threatened the total ruin of the administration. Tindal uses the very words of Burnet — "The queen supported Godolphin against the whigs, from a principle of resentment and jealousy, disliking him less than the whigs." The author of The Other Side of the Question is the only political writer who seems to have understood the intrigue, and we find him reprobating the violent and imprudent conduct of Sunderland, with all the vehemence of political rivalry. He quotes a singular letter from that nobleman to the duke of Roxburgh, in which is the following expression: "I would not have you be bullied by the court party, for the queen herself cannot support that *faction* long." — P. 380.

It is, however, little wonder that a transaction of such moment should not have attracted due attention from historians, when we find De Foe, who was not only a contemporary, but engaged by Godolphin to promote the views of government, expressing to lord Sunderland, with whom he was also in correspondence, his extreme surprise and embarrassment, at the mutual hostility which he witnessed in the two parties, whom he supposed to be both united in the interest of government. — Letters from De Foe to lord Sunderland, May 20th, and 25th, 1707.

Hamilton, though he owed his election solely to the influence of the commander in chief.*

Such political hostility from a party who had affected to identify themselves with government, created unusual concern in the minds of Marlborough and Godolphin; and their chagrin was augmented by the consideration, that the principal agents of the cabal were Sunderland, who was connected with them by the ties of marriage, and Somers, whose interest they were sincerely labouring to promote. They smothered, indeed, their indignation, from delicacy to that connection, and from their fear of offending the whig leaders; but in their private correspondence they gave full scope to their feelings, and in the letters from Marlborough to the duchess, we find him lamenting the perverseness of his son-in-law, and the ingratitude which he had himself experienced from those he had endeavoured to serve.

However great their disapprobation, it was surpassed by the resentment of the queen, who was highly indignant that one of her own ministers should presume to set up an independent interest; and she accused the secretary of state of employing her name and authority, to secure the election of his own partisans. She was still more deeply offended by the disrespectful remonstrances, which he personally made against her partiality to the tories. Indeed, she even threatened to dismiss from her service, a minister who was not only per-

* Letters from the duke of Queensbury to the duke of Marlborough and lord Godolphin. — Also from the dukes of Roxburgh, Hamilton, and Montrose to lord Sunderland.

sonally disagreeable to her, but whom she considered as having abused the trust she reposed in him.

Marlborough, though disapproving the conduct of his son-in-law, was sensible that his disgrace at this juncture would prove a fatal blow to the public interests, as well as to his own consideration abroad. He therefore laboured to soothe the resentment of the queen; and with difficulty induced her to credit the solemn asseverations of Sunderland, that he had exerted no ministerial influence in favour of his party. He likewise urged the duchess to reprove the froward spirit of her son-in-law, and persuade him to behave with more respect towards the queen. By his intercession the fatal blow was suspended, and Sunderland was suffered to remain, though no argument could eradicate the displeasure and indignation, which still rankled against him in the mind of the sovereign.

Notwithstanding the conciliatory part, which Marlborough and Godolphin had acted, this ill-timed struggle created additional dissatisfaction and embarrassment. The whigs resorted to still more violent means both against the queen and ministers. They even threatened to revive the long-agitated question for the invitation of a member of the electoral family; but instead of the electress Sophia, they purposed to bring over the electoral prince, whose youth and enterprising spirit were likely to render him a more dangerous visitor to the queen, than a princess in the decline of life. They gained the duchess of Marlborough to their views, and she was so indiscreet as to re-

commend the unwelcome proposal, not only to her husband, but to the queen.

Nor was this the only instance in which the duke was implicated, by the imprudence or officiousness of others. The duke of Somerset, who to the advantage of high birth and extensive property united a perfect acquaintance with the cabals of courts, had attained considerable influence with the queen, by means of the access which his post, as master of the horse, gave him to the royal presence. Having taken an active share in obtaining the dismission of Harley, he was so elated by success, that he aspired to become head of a separate party. Though hitherto classed with the zealous whigs, he suddenly assumed the tone of moderation, and flattered the queen by condemning the violence and overbearing pretensions of the junta. He even conceived the design of dividing the whigs, and tampered with those whom he hoped to sway by his promises, or influence by his arguments. He thus acquired such interest, that even the duchess, through her agent, Mr. Maynwaring, condescended to solicit his support, in the struggle for the introduction of Somers into the privy council. *

* In one of his letters Mr. Maynwaring gives a curious account of one of his conversations with the duke of Somerset. The letter is without date, but was evidently written in March or April.

" I had the honour to be with his grace this morning, who expressed a great liking of the proposal to bring lord Somers into the cabinet, without an employment, which, he said, shewed that he and his friends were at last come to their reason, and looked as if there would be an end of their extravagant demands; and that for his part, there was nothing that he would not do to bring it about. But yet I am not sure that he does not think that this would in some measure eclipse his pre-

The whig chiefs were too vigilant and zealous to overlook these intrigues. Aware of the intercourse between him and the duchess, and conceiving that he would not have shewn sufficient courage to set up a separate interest of his own accord, they suspected that he was actuated by the secret instigation of Marlborough, and unjustly accused the duke of resorting to so indirect and dishonourable a method of dividing their party.

These cabals and accusations form a prominent subject in the correspondence, which will be submitted to the reader, when we again resume the subject. *

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sent lustre in the court; for 'tis certain never man had such a thirst for power, not without some ingredients of vanity; but yet he is, without doubt, as honest as it is possible for *so great a statesman* to be; and, therefore, since your grace thinks it will be sometimes in his power at least to do hurt, it shall be my care to discharge my duty to him with more diligence than I have done, to see if my poor endeavours may be of any use to make him do what you wish."

* See Chapter 71.

CHAPTER 68.

1708.

Commencement of the campaign.—Marlborough departs from the Hague.—Detects an attempt of the french to surprise Antwerp.—The two armies take the field.—Military movements on both sides.—Marlborough prepares to execute the plan concerted with Eugene.—The french threaten Louvain.—Rapid march of Marlborough to Terbank.—Correspondence on the situation of military affairs.—Arrangements for the junction of Eugene.—Commencement of his march.

We have carried down the narrative of these political feuds till after the commencement of the campaign, that we may present a more connected account of the military operations.

Marlborough reached Ghent on the 9th of May, and after reviewing the british forces, gave orders for the movement of the different corps towards the place of rendezvous, in the vicinity of Brussels.

Collaterally with the plans of offensive operation, the french commanders had formed the design of recovering the principal fortresses of the Netherlands by treachery, and had readily found agents for the purpose, among a people who were highly dissatisfied with the change of government. A correspondence of this kind for the surprise of Antwerp, was detected while

Marlborough remained at Ghent, as appears from a letter to count Rechteren, dated May 30.

" The first hint," he observes, " which we received of this conspiracy was, by a letter intercepted at Brussels, while I was at Ghent. Several others have been since taken, all addressed to the count of Bergueick, to whom they have been suffered to pass. But as they were not subscribed, we could not discover the author. Lastly, six days ago we seized a woman, who put one of these letters into the post-office. She acknowledged the writer to be her son-in-law, who was heretofore a shop-keeper at Antwerp. He has escaped, and we are endeavouring to discover his accomplices. As we have taken measures for the security of the place, we find, by several letters since intercepted, that the enemy are much disconcerted." *

Having completed his arrangements at Ghent, the british commander proceeded to Brussels, where he held a conference with the veteran general Overkirk, to complete the dispositions for taking the field.

From Brussels he wrote to Godolphin: —

" *May* 14.—The great want of rain will oblige me to put off the assembling of the army till the 21st of this month. The french continue to threaten us with the duke of Burgundy and a vast army. I hope the duke of Burgundy will come; and for their army, I cannot see how it is possible for them to be stronger than they were the last campaign.

* Translation from the french draught.

" I send you the inclosed, that you may be the better able to judge of their tempers at the Hague, as to the duke of Savoy. It is certain that the french leave fewer troops in Dauphiné than was expected. I hope they may be the dupes in that matter, for I think it impossible that the duke of Savoy can rely on any promises of the king of France." * * * * * * *

From Lord Godolphin.

" *April* 30.–*May* 11.—Last night, by Mr. Hare, I writ to you upon a particular matter. Whether you will receive that letter so soon as this, is uncertain. I rather think Mr. Hare will not travel as fast as the post.

" I think all you have done with the elector and prince Eugene is entirely right, and will, I hope, have a very good effect, if they come timely enough into the field. But the general backwardness of the germans is extremely discouraging. The duke of Savoy makes heavy complaints by this post, that general Visconti has refused to send him 6000 men for a particular expedition, which he had designed. I hope he lets you know the same things by count Maffei, for there will be no remedy of this from Vienna, but by your means; and it would be a great pity the duke of Savoy should be stopped by his friends; for I don't see that our enemies are likely to be, on that side, in any condition of stopping him. I am very well pleased with their changing their generals in France; and I think it is no good sign for them. The elector of Bavaria's going to the Rhine will make all Flanders uneasy, and jealous that the french de-

sign to give them up to the States, as I really believe they intend to do, in case of any check or considerable disadvantage. For that reason they are willing to have him out of the way, though they endeavour to make him like it, by telling him he will be much nearer the opportunity of getting into his own country.

" I am of opinion that the duke of Burgundy and the rest of the french princes that accompany him, will be rather a hindrance and a perplexity to M. de Vendome, and not any advantage; but I agree with you, that it may very soon be the occasion of some action, not so much from the superiority the french pretend to have, as from the impetuous temper of that prince, who is full of ambition and desire to get a reputation in the world. I should think this consideration ought to make you act with the greater caution, in the beginning of the year, till the germans come into the field, and oblige the enemy to weaken their army. And I hope you will allow me to put you in mind of one thing more, which is, that even after the germans shall be in the field, the communication from the french armies to one another, is quicker than it can be between prince Eugene's army and yours. Consequently you may be full as liable to be surprised by any sudden motion of theirs, as they by yours.

" What you write about Portugal, and of our annoying the coast of France, is extremely right, and shall be followed here as far as we are able to do it. But I have always told you, we cannot do it, without the assistance of the dutch ships, to lie

before Dunkirk; and as yet, I see no assurance of them."

To Lord Godolphin, in reply.

"*Brussels, May* 17.—I have this morning had the favour of yours of the 30th, and in a day or two expect yours by Dr. Hare. I do intend, if the enemy will give me leave, to follow your advice, by gaining time; so that the elector of Hanover and prince Eugene may have time to act. As yet, the french have sent no troops to the Moselle.

"I have writ very pressingly to Vienna in favour of the duke of Savoy. Palmes writes me, that the prince of Salms endeavours to mortify that duke in every thing, which I fear at last may prove very fatal. It is most certain the french have drawn great part of their troops from that country. Mr. Howe says that the elector of Hanover appears very much out of humour, and no ways fond of his journey, not beginning by eight days so soon as he promised. I pray God bless me with success, for I expect none from the elector of Hanover."

"*May* 24. * * * * To-morrow I shall march towards Hall, where we shall join the english and the rest of the troops which came from Flanders. You know already my intention of gaining time, till prince Eugene can act with his army, which I am afraid cannot be till about the middle of next month.

"I have and shall continue to write to Vienna, as I am commanded. I inclose a letter of count Maffei's, which I received last night. By that and some others I have received, I very much fear we

must not expect any great things from the duke of Savoy this campaign; so that my only dependence is upon the junction of prince Eugene with me; for if we should not be able to do something considerable, our affairs in all parts will be in a bad condition.

"The discovery we have made of the design the french had for seizing the citadel of Antwerp, will oblige, I believe, M. Vendome to change his measures. Next Saturday is appointed for their general review. After that, we shall have their order of battle, by which we shall know their number of battalions and squadrons. You will see by the letter from Hanover, that the prince electoral is to serve with his father's troops in this army. It would have been more natural for him to have served with his father; but I suppose they have a mind he should make acquaintance with the english officers."

On the 23d of May, the german troops, composing part of the allied army, began to assemble at Anderlecht; and while Marlborough was waiting for the arrival of the british and dutch, he received intelligence that Vendome had collected his forces behind the Haine, in the vicinity of Mons, and was preparing to advance. This information induced him to make a counter-movement, and the troops immediately marched to Hall, where Overkirk established his head quarters, while those of Marlborough were fixed in the abbey of Belleghem. Here he was joined by the british and dutch. The field deputies also made their appearance, not as before, to control his operations,

but with private instructions to submit implicitly to his orders. The army amounted to 112 battalions and 180 squadrons, and was furnished with a train of 113 pieces of artillery.

As Marlborough had foreseen, the french commander moved at the same time to the vicinity of Soignies, where he was joined by the dukes of Burgundy and Berry, and the young pretender, who were all animated with the hopes of signalising their first career in arms. The force under their command amounted, at the lowest computation, to 124 battalions, and 197 squadrons; and the vicinity of the two armies, with the superiority of the enemy, and the presence of the french princes, seemed to portend a battle, which would perhaps again decide the fate of Brabant.

Not daunted by the imposing attitude of his antagonists, Marlborough took measures for receiving the expected attack, by establishing his camp on the 29th, between Tubise and Herfelingen, and fixing his head quarters at St. Renelle. Here he prepared to execute the plan, which had been previously formed for the junction of the army assembled on the Moselle, by writing to count Rechteren, who commanded in the absence of Eugene, enjoining him to advance with all speed, and without waiting even for the arrival of the 10,000 palatines. He previously dispatched an ostensible letter to the prince, the object of which was, to reconcile the elector of Hanover to the design.

"*Camp of St. Renelle, May* 30.—I write this with the hope that it will find you in the vicinity

of Coblentz, to explain to you our situation. The 21st we began to encamp near Brussels. The 25th all the troops were within reach; and on the 26th they joined in the camp at Hall, the right at Kester, and the left at Hall. From thence we made a forward movement to this camp. On the 26th the enemy encamped at Soignies, three leagues from us; and as it rained, almost without interruption, for the two next days, they were prevented from moving, so that we cannot yet penetrate their design. Some say that they intend to march directly to us, in which case I shall wait to receive them. According to other advices, they meditate an attack on Ath, which we shall find it difficult to prevent, in consequence of the situation of the ground, and of the two armies; and so much the more, because they have not yet turned the least attention to the Moselle, where they are much superior. So that if affairs do not change, I see, to my regret, no appearance of doing any great matter here the whole campaign, since we shall be obliged to remain on the defensive.

"All this induces me to think, that if your highness has no hope of pushing your designs on the Moselle, and if the preparations for that purpose are not ready, it would be much more useful to the common cause, if, instead of remaining inactive with your army, you would make a sudden march with all the troops towards this side, advancing in diligence with the cavalry, while the infantry follows in the same manner. This measure might give us an opportunity of gaining a battle, which would decide the fate of the war. The

elector of Hanover might at the same time obtain a great advantage; since the enemy would have no means of parrying this blow, except by drawing a strong detachment from the Rhine.

" If your highness agrees with me, and will commence your march as soon as possible, I beg you to impart this letter to his electoral highness, as I have not yet communicated with any living soul. But if you are of another opinion, and think you can quickly oblige the enemy to draw detachments from hence, then you will please to commit it to the flames, that no one may know the least of it. Above all, I entreat you to let me hear from you as soon as possible, by express, that I may take my measures for the event; for every thing depends on expedition, since it is certain that your highness might be here a fortnight before any troops which the enemy may draw from the Upper Rhine."*

From the same place we find two letters addressed to Godolphin.

" *May* 28.—Having this opportunity by col. Hammond, I may venture to write freer than by the post. The motions the french have made, makes me begin to be of your opinion, that they are in the mind at this time to venture; and by their having sent no troops to the Moselle, they are certainly a good deal stronger than we are. If we should come to action in this part of the country, it must be decided in a great degree by

* This and the other letters which we find to prince Eugene and count Rechteren are translated either from the french draughts or originals.

the foot, which is what we ought to wish for. But what I fear is, if they have a sufficient strength, that they may post themselves so as to attack Ath, and take it before prince Eugene can join. But this I beg you will say nothing of, to any body. I hope they will not venture it; but as they are now camped, it is in their power. I believe you judge very right of the reason of sending the elector of Bavaria away; for the king of France does know, that one way or other the dutch will have peace, which must make the queen's business more difficult in England. Besides, I have some reason to believe, that several will be of the opinion of lord Peterborough for the invitation, which must be very mortifying. I am very glad to find by yours of the 11th, that you have hopes that Mrs. Morley, though late, will do what you desire. Nothing else can make us happy in serving her well, for though I should have success, that might give safety abroad, but could not hinder disagreeable things at home. You may see that I have very melancholy thoughts, but be assured that I shall use my utmost endeavours that this campaign may be glorious to the queen and nation."

"*May* 31.—I have this morning had the favour of yours of the 14th, with lord Galway's letters, by which I have the pleasure to see that we may fear nothing on that side.

"Count Zinzendorf writes me by the last post, that Palmes has so well succeeded in his negotiations, that the duke of Savoy will have reason to be satisfied, that the elector palatine's affairs are settled to his mind, and that the emperor con-

sents to the sending the 4000 foot for Catalonia, which, by this time, I hope sir J. Lake is taking care of their embarkation. I am sorry to see in some of your former letters, the difficulty there is in leaving a squadron in the winter in the Mediterranean; for I am very much persuaded that till a squadron stays the whole winter, you will not succeed in Spain."

The duke had scarcely dispatched these letters, before his situation became highly critical. The french, instead of hazarding a battle, as was expected, broke up their camp, and moved on his flank through Bois Seigneur Isaac, to Brain l'Allieu, as if with an intention of advancing against Louvain, a design which had been ineffectually attempted in the preceding year. Marlborough was at first doubtful of their object, and fell back to Anderlecht, with the intention of covering Brussels; but finding that the enemy continued their march towards the Dyle, he penetrated their real design, and pressed forward during the night, amidst a deluge of rain. After a forced march of twenty-four hours, the heads of his columns reached the strong camp of Parc. The rest of the army arriving in the course of the afternoon, the head quarters of Marlborough were fixed in the abbey of Terbank, and those of Overkirk in the suburbs of Louvain.

He communicates the account of these movements to his friends in England.

To Lord Godolphin.

" *Terbank, June* 4. — I have this morning received the favour of yours of the 16th by cap-

tain Coot, and that of the 17th by the post, by which I see you have had the pleasure of Newmarket. You will see by my letter to Mr. Secretary, that the french having marched all Friday night and Saturday, with the intention, as I was assured, to continue their march for Louvain, I thought it for the service not to camp at Brussels, but continue the march to this place, where the head of the army arrived yesterday, between eleven and twelve o'clock in the morning. If the french would have ventured, they might have been here at the same time; but finding I continued my march, I believe occasioned their staying at Brain l'Allieu, where they are now encamped, which makes me think, notwithstanding their bragging, that they will not venture a battle.

"You have an expression in your letter of the 17th which is very melancholy, that success cannot secure quietness next winter. By the last letters from Vienna, you might see that the business of the Upper Palatinate was settled to the elector's content; upon which, he sent orders for his troops to march; but two days after, an express arrived at Dusseldorf from Vienna, upon which he has sent positive orders to his troops not to march. I do not know what the difficulties are; but I fear we shall not have the use of those troops a good while, which may, in a great degree, break our measures, they being 10,000 men. You may by this, see the great advantage the king of France has over the allies, since we depend upon the humours of several princes, and he has nothing but his own will and pleasure. The elector should

have been on the Rhine by the 20th of the last month; but my letters from Hanover say, that he did not intend to leave that place till the 30th, notwithstanding that they knew the elector of Bavaria would be at Strasburgh the 21st. I know not what to make of this, but I am afraid we must expect no good news from thence this summer. I would not willingly blame prince Eugene, but his arrival at the Moselle will be ten days after his promise. I believe his stay at Vienna is occasioned by the difficulties of the Palatinate. I am so tired, and am to be up so early to-morrow, that I cannot read my letters, so that you will excuse any errors."

"*Terbank, June* 7.—I had the favour yesterday of yours of the 20th from Newmarket, where I should have been glad to have been with you; for besides the pleasure of your company, I should have enjoyed quietness, which is what I long extremely after; but God knows when I shall have it. You will know by this post, that the elector of Bavaria has been obliged to make a detachment to the Moselle, which will give an opportunity to the elector of Hanover to cross the Rhine. You will have seen by my last, that we are like to lose the 10,000 palatines, at least for some time. I have writ to prince Eugene, I think time so precious that he ought not to stay for the palatines.

"The enemy continues in their camp at Brain l'Allieu; and I shall not march till they do, or that I hear from prince Eugene; so that I have begun this day to pass in review the right wing of

horse of the first line, and to-morrow shall see half the foot of the same line, and so continue every day, till I have seen the whole army. I shall by the next post do myself the honour of sending the prince * an order of battle of the enemy's, as well as of our own army. If you have curiosity, the prince may let you have a copy of them."

To the Duchess.

"*June* 11. — Whenever I have any reason, and my mind a little at ease, I make use of that time to write to my dear soul. The post does not go till to-morrow; but as I am that morning to see the left wing of horse, I make use of this time to tell you, that I am in my health, I thank God, as well as one of my age, and that has not his mind very much at ease, can be; for what I concerted with prince Eugene will not be executed by 15 days so soon as was resolved, which will be an advantage to the duke of Vendome, by giving him time. But the slowness of the germans is such, that we must be always disappointed.

"Our news from Spain is as favourable as we could expect, and by lord Galway's letters we have nothing to fear on the side of Portugal.

"The elector of Bavaria, having been obliged to make a considerable detachment from his army for the Moselle, will, we hope, enable the elector of Hanover to do something on the Rhine. By this time we flatter ourselves that the duke of Savoy is taking the field; the greatest difficulty he will meet with is, the mountains he must pass before he can get into France. As for us in this

* The prince of Denmark.

country, we have a very good army, but the french think themselves more numerous; however, I hope, with the blessing of God, that this campaign will not pass without some good success on our side. You easily believe me, when I tell you that I do from my heart wish that the favourable account I now give you of the posture of our armies, may meet with no disappointment, and that this campaign may be so successful, that I may have the happiness of being with you in quiet this next summer, and for the remaining part of my life. I have this afternoon the favour of yours of the 23d and 25th, but am returned so late to my quarters, that I must answer them by the next post."

To Lord Godolphin.

"*Terbank, June* 11. — Since my last I have none of yours to answer; and I have been busy every day in reviewing the troops. The greatest part are in extreme good order. I shall continue in this camp, unless the enemy march, till I hear from prince Eugene, that he is in motion; for as yet I have no account of his being gone from Vienna. The news we have from Spain is more favourable than we could reasonably expect, and I find by lord Galway's letters, that we have nothing to fear on the Portugal side. We do flatter ourselves, that the detachment the elector of Bavaria has been obliged to make, may give an opportunity to the elector of Hanover of doing something on the Rhine. The continual complaints of the duke of Savoy are, I am afraid, forerunners for our not expecting much on that

side. The disappointment of the palatine troops, and Eugene not being able to put in execution, by at least a fortnight, what was agreed between him and me, gives great disadvantage. However, I have taken my measures, that nothing may be wanting at his arrival, being persuaded that our greatest hopes must be in what we shall be able to do in the first four or five days; for their foot will be able to join them as soon, if not sooner than ours. But if prince Eugene uses that diligence he has promised, he may, with his horse, join me some days before they can, by stealing a march, which time we must make use of. I have this afternoon received yours of the 25th, but have not time to do more than to thank you, till the next post."

"*Terbank, June* 14.—By the letters of lord Galway, as well as what you write me in yours of the 25th and 26th, I cannot but observe that his project, that he now makes, does no way agree with the project he sent by Mr. Stanhope. That would have been expensive, but this is likely to be much more. There can be no doubt but Cadiz would be of great use. But I beg you to consider how impossible it will be to have success, unless it be done by surprise; and how impossible that will be, when the much greatest part of the troops are to march by land, and that you are to deceive the portuguese, as well as the french and spaniards. But if it be practicable, it must be this year and not the next, for when you shall the next winter, put your troops into such quarters as may be proper for that expedition, you may be

assured that they will take such precaution as will put that place out of danger.

" You know that by the treaty, England and Holland are obliged to give every year to the king of Portugal, upwards of 4000 barrels of powder, which is more than is expended by France and all the allies in their armies; so that I beg you will be cautious of giving any encouragement of having an english train established in Portugal; for if the attempt at Cadiz goes on, the cannon and every thing for that expedition must be furnished by the fleet. As for the refugee officers, I think he sets a much greater value on them than they deserve. If he can make any use of them, I should think they would be better there than in Ireland.

" I am very sorry you have so much occasion to put you in mind of lord Croft's saying, but as *God is above*, so I trust in him, or else our prospect is very dreadful.

" The inclosed is what came to me by express from count Rechteren. You will see by it how uncertain all measures taken with the germans are; for the army on the Moselle was to be formed, at farthest, by the 27th of May, and by this letter we must not expect it till the beginning of July. Patience is a virtue absolutely necessary, when one is obliged to keep measures with such people. I beg you will inform her majesty and the prince, that they may not think me negligent; and if the queen approves of it, I think count Rechteren's letter might be read to the cabinet council, so that they might see the reason of my staying in this

camp. What you mention of Toulon is not now to be thought on. I own to you that I fear we must not expect, this campaign, much from the duke of Savoy; but the best thing we can do is, to make him believe, that we flatter ourselves with great success on his side, and that we rely entirely on him, not doubting but he will take the best measures."

In the interval, Marlborough had again written to count Rechteren, apprising him of the measures for facilitating the march of the troops, and desiring him to make such movements as might draw the attention of the enemy towards the Moselle. He also dispatched one of his aides-de-camp, captain Armstrong, who, besides regulating the details of the intended march with count Rechteren, advanced as far as Frankfort, to meet Eugene on his return from Vienna.

On the 11th of June he again wrote to Eugene.

"I am glad that count Rechteren sent captain Armstrong with my letters, to meet your highness at Frankfort, since that will have given you an opportunity of concerting the necessary measures with the elector of Hanover, without loss of time. You will have learnt on your arrival, that the elector of Bavaria has sent a strong detachment towards the Moselle, which will doubtless march forward, in proportion as your troops advance, so you will easily judge that for a beginning we can rely only on the cavalry, with which I request you to hasten in all diligence; for we can only reckon on a surprise, which will depend on the little time you may take for your march between the Moselle

and the Meuse. If the palatines are not arrived, you will please not to wait for them; and as soon as I know the day you will be at Maestricht, I will send some one to meet you, and acquaint you with my projects.

" If you can gain only forty-eight hours, I will make my dispositions for the moment of your arrival; and with the blessing of Heaven, we may profit so well by those two days, as to feel the good effects of it the rest of the campaign. You will order the infantry to hasten as much as possible to Maestricht, where they will receive directions for their further march.

" The two armies have remained eight days in their present camps, and there is no appearance of a change, till I have the news which I expect from your highness. I have employed this time in making an exact review of the troops, which are in so good a condition, that it would gratify your highness to see them."

By a letter from Eugene, dated June 14, the british commander had at last the satisfaction to hear that the discussion with the elector palatine was terminated, and that he might daily expect intelligence of the intended march.

" *Frankfort, June* 14. — I have continued here some days since I received your highness's letter. The count of Rechteren, who has kept yours of the 30th, will come to-morrow to Rheinfels to meet me. I press forward the march of the troops, and make all the necessary arrangements. Some difficulty has arisen for the palatines, the elector having persisted in not letting them march, until

the investiture had taken place, which, however, depends on certain formalities, not arising from the emperor. But from letters, which I have just received from cardinal Lamberg, at Ratisbon, the affair seems to be done. Your highness may be convinced, that I will omit nothing to press on my march from Rheinfels. I will give you due notice by a courier, being myself extremely impatient to assure you in person, of my respect, &c."

Reply of Marlborough.

"*June* 23. — I was much rejoiced at what your highness did me the honour to write to me, in yours of the 15th, that the affair of the palatinate was finished; so that I hope the palatine troops are ready to join. I send your highness another letter, in conformity with the project concerted with count Rechteren, to be communicated to the elector of Hanover. Your highness will also do well to write a few words to the elector palatine, and the landgrave of Hesse, that they may not be offended with the secrecy which we have observed."

The second letter to the elector, here referred to, was conformable to that of May 30, which Eugene, from prudential considerations, had deferred delivering.

At this anxious crisis, the difficulties of the british general were increased, by the alarm and despondency which reigned in Holland, and the consequent eagerness manifested by some of the members of government for a peace. On this subject, as well as on the military movements, we find two interesting letters to lord Godolphin.

" *Terbank, June* 18. — Since my last I have had the favour of yours of the 31st and 1st of this month. I am not surprised at the conversation you have had with the duke of Savoy's minister, though I am very confident he has no thoughts of that expedition for this campaign; but he knows very well how fond every honest englishman is of that project. *

" My opinion is, that the duke of Savoy knows too well that if he shall be able to do nothing considerable this campaign, the allies may grow weary of leaving so many troops with him the next year, unless he can, by some plausible offer, engage England.

" By what I have received this morning from prince Eugene, the difficulty of the palatine troops continues, and he is not certain when the 4000 imperial horse can be at their rendezvous. In the mean time, you will see, by the inclosed paper, the diligence and care taken by the elector of Bavaria. It is most certain that the few troops which the french have on the Rhine give a great occasion to the elector of Hanover, and I should think a good opportunity for that of Franche Comté. †

" I shall follow your advice in letting the elector know what my thoughts are; but I must own frankly to you, that I take the humour of the elector to be such, that the sure way of not being disappointed is, to expect nothing from thence.

* Alluding to some proposal for a renewal of the design on Toulon.

† This alludes to a plan, which at this time was formed by La Braconnière, a refugee officer, to excite an insurrection in Franche Comté.

" I send you the letter I have received this morning from M. Buys, with the answer I have made to it. You will see by it that they are not changed in their opinion, so that it will be necessary for you to think well of what answer I shall give; for it will be communicated to the four burgomasters. I am afraid that Amsterdam is very much determined for peace, and if that should be once known by the States, it might be of very dangerous consequence this winter. When M. Buys and his companion spoke of this matter to me, they assured me they had acquainted nobody but myself, being very sensible of the consequence. Your letter by Molesworth is not yet come to me."

" *June* 28. * * * * * By letters I received last night from prince Eugene, he gives me hopes of being in a condition of beginning his march, either to-morrow or the day following, and that he will, the night before his march, send a copy of my letter of the 24th to the elector of Hanover. The inclosed is a copy of my letter. Prince Eugene thinks the elector will not approve of his march, which is the reason of his not acquainting him sooner with my letter, so that he might not have it in his power to hinder the march, which he thinks otherwise he would do. That which gives me the greatest uneasiness is, that I find prince Eugene thinks that their horse cannot join me in less than ten days, and that their foot must have 14 or 15 days. If they cannot make greater expedition, I fear the horse of the duke of Berwick will get before them, which I have writ to the prince, by express, this morning. Accord-

ing to the answer I shall have from him, I shall give the necessary orders for eight days' bread, which I shall take with me when I leave this camp, my design being to engage their army, if possible, or to oblige them to retire to such a post, as that I may have it in my power to make the siege of Charleroy; but if they take such a camp as will cover Charleroy, I shall then be obliged to stay for the foot, before I begin my march for Flanders. Since the disappointments prince Eugene has met with have lost us above a month, and that the enemy know too much of our design, the best thing we can hope for is, that we may be able to oblige them to come to some action; for it is the opinion of prince Eugene, as well as mine, that we must not expect any ease from the elector, which is a misfortune, but such a one as I know not how to remedy. We were in hopes to have heard that the elector of Hanover's army had passed the Rhine, the french being at this time very weak on that side. The letters from that army do not come till to-morrow, but our letters from Frankfort say, that they will not pass that river till prince Eugene's army begins to act."

"*Terbank, July* 2. — Since my last I have had the favour of yours of the 11th and 15th. By the first I see the uneasy circumstances you labour under; and I do assure myself that you do me the justice to believe, that for your sake, as well as for the queen, I would cheerfully venture my life to make you two of one mind; for unless that can be, it were quieter and better to be under ground. I beg you to believe that my love and zeal for you

is so much, that I should not value the difficulties I meet with here abroad. I have by this night's post sent yours of the 15th to M. Buys; what answer he makes you shall be sure to have. I am told that he is so possessed with the thoughts of peace, that he could not forbear saying lately to an honest man, who was not of his opinion, that if we had not good success this campaign, they must have peace."

To Lord Sunderland.

"*Terbank, July* 2. — My lord; I thank you for your letter of the 15th past, and shall expect yours and my lord treasurer's thoughts relating to the marquis of Guiscard *, as you promise me. You will now hear that the investiture is actually given to the elector palatine, and I hope our next letters will tell us the same of the Montferrat to the duke of Savoy. Prince Eugene began his march with his army on Friday last, in order to join us, and I hope will make so much diligence as to prevent the enemy, upon which the whole depends; for though we have no account yet of their motions, 'tis not to be doubted but they are likewise hastening this way. I expect the prince himself here, on Thurday or Friday, to concert matters with me, and reckon his horse will not be above two or three days behind him. As soon as they are at hand, we shall begin to move towards the enemy, in hopes to bring them to a battle, which I fear they will avoid. I wish I could flatter myself,

* We find among the Marlborough Papers innumerable letters and projects, furnished by Guiscard, for the invasion of France, which were never carried into execution.

but I have no hopes, that Toulon will be attempted; for of all projects that were the best for England. I am, with truth, &c."

Having made all these arrangements, and taken precautions to act offensively against the french army in the Netherlands, Marlborough deemed it expedient no longer to withhold the information from the States. He therefore dispatched a letter announcing his design, by a courier from Terbank, on the 2d of July.

" High and mighty lords; Having reflected on the situation of our affairs in this country, and considered those on the Moselle, and observing the little probability of supplying the army of prince Eugene with all the requisites, so as to act offensively and with vigour; and being confirmed in my opinion by a resolution of your high mightinesses, communicated to me by the deputies, I have imparted to prince Eugene and to count Rechteren my opinion, that it will be more advantageous to the interests of the common cause, for the army on the Moselle to join us in Brabant, without delay, and entreated them, should they be of my opinion, to communicate the same to the elector of Hanover, and to begin their march as soon as possible. These measures being taken in conformity with the approbation of the field deputies, I doubt not but they will give notice to your high mightinesses. Nevertheless, I would not fail to inform you, that I have just received, from prince Eugene, intelligence that his army commenced their march last Friday, the cavalry advancing by long forced marches, while the infantry

rapidly followed; and that it was his intention to arrive in our camp on the 5th or 6th, to concert with me the operations, according to our arrangement, that as soon as the cavalry shall approach, we shall move directly upon the enemy, and bring on a battle, trusting in God to bless our designs, and hoping that I shall soon have an opportunity of sending you good news." *

* Translated from the french draught.

CHAPTER 69.

1708.

Plans of the french commanders for the recovery of the conquered places in Brabant and Flanders.—Importance of Oudenard.—Surprise of Ghent and Bruges.—Movement of the french, to cover the siege of Oudenard.—Countermovement of Marlborough.—Encamps at Anderlecht and Asch.—Arrival of prince Eugene.—Temporary illness of Marlborough.—Rapid march to the camp of Lessines.—Retreat of the french towards the Scheld.—Resolution of Marlborough and Eugene to risk an engagement.—Advance towards the Scheld.—Description of Oudenard and its vicinity.—Passage of the Scheld.—Victory of Oudenard.—Retreat and loss of the french army.—Letters written from the field of battle.

WHILE Marlborough remained at Terbank, eagerly looking to the movements of Eugene, and anxiously expecting the junction of his forces, new dangers arose in other quarters.

Unwilling again to measure their strength with the british general in the field, the french commanders formed a plan, no less bold than judicious, to rob him of all his recent conquests, and reduce him to the same situation, as when he commenced his glorious career. This design was grounded on the general discontent, which pervaded the Netherlands, under the oppressive government of the dutch; and which had already manifested itself in the plot for the surrender of Antwerp.

They meditated the surprise of Ghent, which commanded the course of the Lys and the Scheld; and of Bruges, the centre of the principal water communications. They calculated that the acquisition of these important fortresses would lead to the capture of the smaller places; and, finally, their plan embraced the reduction of Oudenard, a point of the highest consequence, in a military view.

Situated on the Scheld, and at the verge of the frontier, Oudenard was the connecting link for the alternate defence of Flanders and Brabant; and although incapable of a protracted resistance, was yet the most convenient place of arms for the operations on either side. While it was occupied by the allies, they could penetrate towards Lille, raise the sieges of Menin or Courtray, interpose between the borders of France and Ghent, and cut off the communications of a hostile army. If Brabant were threatened, they might pass the Scheld; and occupying the strong camps of Lessines or Leuse, present a front, or hang on the flank, of a corps attempting to push towards Brussels. The banks of the Scheld being elevated, present many defensive positions on either side; but such positions were useful only to the army which held the fortress. If Oudenard was thus important in a general view, it was still more valuable, in the actual circumstances of the allies. It was the chief avenue to their other fortresses in Flanders, as well as the only channel of their direct communications with England, and its fall would have ensured the loss of all their

conquests in that quarter; while the enemy, seated in the most fertile and opulent district of Europe, and holding the fortresses on the Scheld, would have easily baffled every attempt for their expulsion, flanked all direct attacks on French Hainault, and stripped of their value the advantages of the two preceding campaigns.

The first part of the design conceived by the french commanders, was no less successfully executed, than judiciously planned. Having diverted the attention of Marlborough, by their feints on the side of Louvain, they suddenly decamped from Brain l'Allieu, on the evening of the 4th of July, and rapidly advanced towards Hall and Tubise, where they intended to cross the Senne. In their march, they detached several corps to the different places of Flanders, where they had established a secret correspondence with the disaffected. At the dawn of the 5th of July, one of these parties, commanded by brigadier La Faille and Pasteur, appeared before Ghent. By the negligence or treachery of the watch, a small number of soldiers were suffered to gain admission as deserters, and found means to amuse the guard, till the main body arrived, and secured the gate. The other gates being seized with the same facility, the whole detachment advanced into the market place. La Faille, who had been high-bailiff of Bruges, and was well known to the inhabitants, assembled the magistrates and burghers in the town-house. Producing a pardon, signed by the elector of Bavaria, for their defection to the allies,

he readily obtained their submission, and invested a small garrison of 300 men, who held the citadel.

Six hours after the surprise of Ghent, count de la Motte appeared before Bruges, which likewise surrendered on the first summons. He next endeavoured to surprise Damme, but failing in his attempts to intimidate the governor, he marched to Plassendael, a small but important fort, on the canal of Bruges, and took it by storm.

Major-general Murray, who had been posted with a detachment at Mariekirk, was no sooner apprised of these movements, than he hastened towards Ghent, and arrived in time to save the place, had he not been refused admission by the burghers. He had, therefore, no resource but to retire to Sas van Ghent, and leave the small garrison in the castle to their fate. Here he was joined by deputies from the Hague, who on the first alarm were dispatched, to concert with him the requisite measures for the defence of the forts and posts, which covered this part of the frontier.

Receiving prompt intelligence of the sudden movement made by his antagonists towards the Dender, Marlborough broke up from Terbank, on the morning of the 5th, and crossing the Senne and the canal of Brussels, encamped with his left at Anderlecht, and his right at the mill of Tombeck. Here he learnt the march of the hostile detachments against Ghent and Bruges, and pushed forward a body of cavalry, under general Bothmar, with orders to cross the Scheld, near Termond; and if possible, to obviate the danger.

During this march, the french were traversing the Senne, at Tubise and Hall, within a short distance of the camp which Marlborough had chosen. He arrived too late in the evening to arrest their progress, but he hoped to bring them to an engagement before they could reach the Dender. He therefore sent out a strong detachment to harass their rear, and at one in the morning, riding to the right of his lines, he ordered the troops to form, and hold themselves in readiness for battle, on the first appearance of the dawn.

The alertness of the enemy, however, baffled his design. Continuing their march during the night, they crossed the Dender in several columns, near Ninove, and the allied detachment arrived in time only to seize a part of their baggage, and to make three hundred prisoners. In their haste they sunk their bridges, and the panic which reigned among them, was proved by the crowds of deserters who flocked to the confederate camp. Having accomplished the passage of the Dender, they descended the stream, and took post between Alost and Oerdegem, with a view to cover the attack against the citadel of Ghent, and at the same time to threaten Brussels. The consternation, indeed, was so great among the inhabitants of that large and opulent capital, that Marlborough advanced to Asch, within a league of Alost, where he encamped on the evening of the 6th. Here the melancholy forebodings, which the movements of the enemy called forth, were realised, by the intelligence which arrived of the surprise of Bruges and Ghent, and the investment of the citadel.

The alarm was at its height both in Brussels and in the army.

In this trying moment, he was cheered by the arrival of Eugene, who, finding that he could not effect a junction in time, left his cavalry at Maestricht, and hastened to take a personal share in the expected conflict. The appearance of the illustrious chief restored joy and alacrity; and Marlborough welcomed him by observing, "I am not without hopes of congratulating your highness on a great victory; for my troops will be animated by the presence of so distinguished a commander."

Eugene warmly approved the resolution, which his friend had adopted, of engaging the enemy; and the proposal being sanctioned by a council of war, held the ensuing day, pioneers were instantly detached in every direction, to clear the roads for the passage of the troops. As Oudenard was known to be the next object of attack, general Chanclos, who commanded at Ath, was directed to collect reinforcements from his own and the neighbouring garrisons, and with these troops, and a corps of Waleff's dragoons, to throw himself into the place. This he happily accomplished, without the slightest obstruction.

On the eve of so awful a crisis, which he might not survive, Eugene took the opportunity to visit his aged mother, the countess of Soissons, who resided at Brussels. Soon after his departure, Marlborough was seized with a fever, the result of fatigue, anxiety, and watchfulness, and was earnestly recommended by his physicians to quit the camp. The peril of the moment, however, raised

his active mind above the sense of bodily suffering: he matured his arrangements for the approaching conflict, though on account of his indisposition, he continued in his tent, and the regular orders were issued from the quarters of marshal Overkirk. His disorder abating the ensuing day, he was enabled to resume the arduous duties of his station.

The enemy having received intelligence that the citadel of Ghent had surrendered, after a defence of two days, prepared to execute the rest of their design. Detachments were sent against Oudenard, which was invested on the morning of the 9th; and a train of heavy artillery was ordered from Tournay. To cover the siege, they prepared to occupy the strong camp of Lessines, on the Dender.

But they were opposed to a general, whose promptitude and activity have been seldom paralleled, and whose resources were called forth, by the magnitude of the stake for which he was contending. Although the distance he had to traverse was twice that of the enemy, no obstacle could divert him from his object. To quiet the alarm which reigned in Brussels, the garrison was reinforced with four battalions of infantry. The roads having been cleared, the army broke up from Asch, at two in the morning of the 9th, and moved towards Herfelingen, by the left, in four columns, the infantry in the center, and the cavalry on the flanks. The whole body of grenadiers, and thirty squadrons of horse, under lord Albemarle, covered the rear, and prepared to check any attempt of the enemy

on Brussels. In consequence of this precaution, the movement was so rapid, firm, and connected, that before mid-day the heads of the columns reached Herfelingen, five leagues from Asch. Here the duke halted, and the troops encamped in their order of march, with the village in the rear, and the front towards the Dender.

Four hours afterwards, Cadogan was detached, with eight battalions, and as many squadrons, to throw bridges over the Dender, and post himself at Lessines. At this moment Eugene returned, and participated in the exultation, which the prospect of a battle inspired. The evening tattoo was the signal for the army to resume the march, which was continued during the night. Towards morning, Marlborough had the satisfaction to find that Cadogan had reached Lessines at midnight, and leaving 800 men to occupy the place, had taken post beyond the Dender, over which he had thrown bridges. He therefore crossed with exulting confidence, and encamped with his right to the Dender, and the front covered by a stream, which falls into that river.

At this moment he descried the heads of the hostile columns on the distant heights, and perceived that his promptitude had disconcerted the plans of his antagonists. Indeed the french generals had so little calculated on the rapidity of his movement, that they delayed detaching a corps for the occupation of Lessines, until it was too late. Disappointed and discouraged, they now turned to the right, and hastened towards Gavre,

with a view to shelter themselves behind the line of the Scheld. *

From Herfelingen and Lessines, Marlborough announced the progress and event of his march to the treasurer.

" *July* 9. — I should answer two of your letters, but the treachery of Ghent, continual marching, and some letters † I have received from England, have so vexed me, that I was yesterday in so great a fever, that the doctor would have persuaded me to have gone to Brussels; but I thank God I am now better, and by the next post I hope to answer your letters. The States have used this country so ill, that I no ways doubt but all the towns in this country will play us the same trick as Ghent has done, whenever they have it in their power. I have been desired by the deputies to write, that her majesty would be pleased to let the troops, now in the Isle of Wight, be sent for their relief to Ostend; so that it is likely you will be desired the same thing by M. Vriberg; but I hope the queen will continue in the resolution of employing those troops as she first designed; for I think that will be much more for hers and the nation's honour; but Vriberg must not know my opinion.

" I beg, with my humble duty, you will make my excuses to the queen, for my not acknowledging the honour of hers till the next post. I am so extremely troubled at what has been writ me con-

* Circulars from Herfelingen and Lessines. — Letters from Marlborough to Mr. Boyle and lord Godolphin. — Gazette. — Complete History of Europe. — Lediard. — Histoire de Marlborough.

† From the queen and the duchess.

cerning my brother George and Mr. Walpole, that I beg you will acquaint me with what you know of that matter.

" Having made a halt of five hours, I am continuing my march, as I intend to do all the night, in hopes of getting to the camp of Lessines before the enemy, who made yesterday a detachment of 16,000 men, for the investing of Oudenard. If I get the camp of Lessines before them, I hope to be able to hinder the siege, being resolved to venture every thing, rather than lose that place."

" *Lessines, the* 10*th.* — Mr. Cardonel telling me that by a mistake the letters were not gone, I have opened mine, to let you know that the head of the army is got hither. I have received advice this morning from the governor of Oudenard, that he was invested on both sides of his town yesterday morning. I should think myself happy since I am got into this camp, if they continue their resolution of carrying on that siege."

As the ensuing march from Lessines produced the decisive engagement at Oudenard, we shall here pause, to take a survey of the surrounding country and field of action, that we may more distinctly exhibit the movements and details of this memorable conflict.

From the frontier of France to the confluence of the Scheld and Lys, the surface consists of low hills and bold undulations, which contract the valley of the Scheld in various places, till they gradually subside in the vicinity of Ghent. Human industry here exerts unremitting efforts, and the eye no where rests on a patch of heath, or even on

a single acre in repose. On the bolder swells of the upland, which are generally denominated Couters, corn predominates; on the lower, flax, clover, pease, and buck-wheat. Woods or coppices are found only on the steep acclivities, where the plough cannot act, or in patches of plantations, except towards France, where the country is shaded by forests. Numerous villages and hamlets enliven this rich and varied surface; small farms and cottages are scattered in every direction; and at intervals appear the turrets of a castellated mansion, a convent or abbey. Of the roads, which form the communications between these countless dwellings, those across the couters are usually bare, and the others are mostly fringed with underwood, or bordered with avenues. Towards the Scheld, which winds along a valley comparatively low, are ranges of meadows, intersected with numerous drains and water-courses.

At the distance of a mile north of Oudenard, is the village of Eyne. Here the ground rises into a species of low, but capacious amphitheatre. It sweeps along a moderately sized plain, southward, to near the glacis of Oudenard, where it is crowned by the village of Bevere, and numerous windmills. Turning westward, it then rises into another broad hill, under the name of the Boser Couter, and the highest point is near a tilleul or lime-tree, and a windmill overlooking the village of Oycke. From thence the ground curves towards Marolen; and the eye glancing over the narrow valley watered by the Norken, is arrested by another upland plain, which trends by Huyse, gradually sinking till it ter-

minates near Asper. A line representing the chord of this semicircle, would commence about a league above the confluence of the Norken with the Scheld, and traverse the plain of Heurne, which is nearly as high as the amphitheatre itself. Within this space two scanty rivulets, gushing from the base of the hill of Oycke, at a small distance asunder, embrace a low tongue of land, the middle of which rises into a gentle elevation. The borders of these rivulets, and a part of the intervening surface, are intersected with inclosures, surrounding the farms and hamlets of Barwaen, Chobon, and Diepenbeck. At the source of one is the castellated mansion of Bevere or Brian, at that of the other, the hamlet of Retelhoeck, situated in a woody and steep recess. These streams uniting near a public house, called Schaerken, proceed partly in a double channel along a marshy bed to the Scheld, near Eyne. The Norken rising near Morlehem, beyond Oycke, runs for some distance almost parallel to the Scheld; then passing by Lede, Mullem, and Asper, it meets another streamlet from the west, and terminates in a species of canal, skirting the Scheld to a considerable distance below Gavre. The borders of the Norken, like those of the other rivulets, are fringed with underwood, coppices, and thickets; and from Mullem to Herlehem the roads are skirted with avenues. Behind, are inclosures surrounding a small plain, which terminates beyond the mill of Royegem. Between these is a hollow road, which leads up to the hill of Oycke.

After this cursory view of the scene of action,

we proceed to trace the movements of the contending hosts.

During the night of the 10th, the allied commanders prepared for an engagement, although they had a space of no less than fifteen miles to traverse, and a broad and rapid stream to cross, and although they were yet in doubt what course their antagonists would pursue, or what position they intended to occupy.

The state of the hostile army was, however, highly favourable to their views. The french commanders, relying on the apparent anxiety of Marlborough to cover the great towns in his rear, little suspected that he would have made so bold and rapid a movement as the march to Lessines, which placed him between them and their own frontier. This disappointment inflamed the contention which already reigned between the duke of Burgundy and Vendome; and the discord which it produced in their counsels was not unknown to the confederate chiefs. Foiled, therefore, in their design on Lessines, the french commanders relinquished the investment of Oudenard, and directed their march to Gavre, where they had prepared bridges for crossing the Scheld.

On this occasion Marlborough and Eugene evinced the same promptitude, decision, and spirit, which had marked their operations on the Danube; and they were ably seconded by their veteran colleague Overkirk. Aware that an army which is attacked in retreat, or in crossing a river, loses all the advantage of order and discipline, they pushed forward to the Scheld, to come in

contact with the enemy at the moment of their passage.

Preparatory to this movement, Cadogan and Rantzau were detached with a strong advanced guard of 16 battalions, consisting of the brigades of Sabine, Plettenberg, and Evans; and eight squadrons of the dragoons of Bulau, Leibregement, and Schulemburg, with the quarter colours, and 32 pieces of artillery. They were directed to clear the roads, and throw bridges over the Scheld, in the vicinity of Oudenard. Departing at the dawn of the 11th, they were followed at eight in the morning by the whole army. The order of march was again in four columns, by the left, each line forming two columns, the cavalry leading the way, and the artillery in the rear.

At half past ten in the morning Cadogan reached the right bank of the Scheld, between the town and abbey of Eename, and immediately commenced the construction of the bridges. About the same time the hostile columns drew towards Gavre, two leagues below. Their bridges being already prepared, the french advanced guard, led on by the marquis de Biron, passed leisurely over, without suspecting the approach of the allies; and some of the soldiers were even detached to collect forage. The bridges were completed about midday. As the heads of the columns of cavalry were drawing near, Rantzau passed the Scheld with the horse and quarter colours, and was followed by Cadogan, with twelve battalions, the other four being left to guard the pontoons. They advanced to the top of the high ground, between Eyne and

Bevere, and formed at the extremity of the amphitheatre, the infantry opposite Eyne, and the cavalry extending on the left, towards the inclosures near Schaerken.

Cadogan proceeding to reconnoitre, descried several squadrons of the enemy on the farther side of the plain, and observed their foraging parties scattered about Heurne and Ruybroek. He instantly sent the cavalry to attack them, who drove them towards Synghem, and took several prisoners. But the alarm being given, Biron advanced with twelve squadrons, repulsed all the assailants, who had proceeded beyond Eyne, and advanced to the windmill behind the village. Here he saw the allied detachment in position, and observing at the same time the battalions posted near the bridges, and the columns of cavalry in the act of crossing, he withdrew, to avoid the shock of the whole confederate army, the greater part of which he supposed had already traversed the river.

The celerity of Marlborough, indeed, gave colour to this conjecture, for hearing, on his way, that the enemy were crossing at Gavre, he became alarmed for the safety of his advance. Directing the flank column of cavalry to guard against the movements which he supposed the enemy might make on his line of march, he and Eugene pressed forward at the head of the second column, which consisted entirely of prussians. They proceeded part of the way at full gallop, and fortunately reached the bridges at the moment when the marquis de Biron had advanced to reconnoitre the assailants, by

whom his foragers had been so unexpectedly attacked.

The apparition of the allies created a general sensation throughout the french ranks. Vendome, however, did not partake of the alarm which seems to have seized the rest of the commanders. From the distant clouds of dust, which marked the course of the moving columns, he judged that the main body was yet half a league from the Scheld, and that there was still sufficient time to attack the confederates, before they could form in order of battle. To secure the plain of Heurne, and cover the deploiement of his lines, he directed seven battalions of the swiss regiments of Pfeffer, Villars, and Gueder, to occupy the village; and the cavalry of the right, consisting of part of the household troops, to draw up near the windmill. Under cover of this preliminary disposition, he intended to form his left on the plain of Heurne, and extend his right across the Boser Couter, towards Mooreghem. The duke of Burgundy, however, countermanded the order, either from persuasion that an army so numerous as that of the confederates could not make so rapid a march, or from the opinion, that the high ground of Huysse, with the Norken in front, would afford a more eligible position. The altered direction of the french columns was visible to the allied detachment; it appeared doubtful whether they would risk an engagement, or hasten towards their lines, between Tournay and Lille: irresolution and perplexity were evident in all their movements.

Meanwhile Pfeffer, with his seven battalions, in-

stead of occupying Heurne, advanced and took post at Eyne, either from inadvertence, or from a mistake caused by a similarity of names. Although this post was advantageous, the change in the direction of the french army placed him beyond the reach of protection; and the household horse, who had orders to cover him, were not only too far in the rear, but were afterwards recalled, and only a few squadrons left in their stead.

Marlborough and Eugene lost no time in taking advantage of the enemy's indecision. While the march of the infantry was accelerated by repeated orders, they jointly superintended the passage of the Scheld, and posted the troops as fast as they arrived. Soon after two o'clock the second column of cavalry was formed in front of Bevere, and a battery of six field pieces placed on the hill above Schaerken. About three, the head of the first column of cavalry, and the whole infantry of the right wing reached the bridges. To accelerate the passage, the horse of the left column passed through Oudenard, and began likewise to appear. The four battalions, who had hitherto guarded the bridges, marched to join the advanced guard, and general Cadogan seized the favourable moment to strike the first blow. Having observed the insulated position of Pfeffer's brigade, and the diminution of the corps of cavalry left to protect him, he advanced with 12 battalions, and the cavalry of Rantzau. Brigadier Sabine, at the head of four english battalions, led the attack. They descended the hill, and forded the rivulet, near Eyne, while the cavalry passed above, and turned the rear of

the village. A sharp conflict ensued, but the enemy were soon forced, and three entire battalions, with the brigadier, were made prisoners. The rest were either killed, or intercepted in their flight near the windmill. Rantzau, with his eight squadrons of hanoverians and the quarter-masters of the army, then advanced upon the plain of Heurne, to charge the cavalry, who perceiving the destruction of the infantry, endeavoured to retire into the inclosures behind; but before they could effect their purpose, they were overtaken, routed, and driven across the Norken, among the columns of their own army, which were forming on the farther side. Twelve standards fell into the hands of the victors, and the colonel of the regiment of La Breteche was made prisoner. The electoral prince of Hanover, afterwards George the second, with general Schulemburg, count Lusky, and several volunteers of distinction, animated the troops by charging at the head of a squadron. Count Lusky was killed in the struggle, and the prince himself had a horse shot under him.

The french commanders were now convinced that to retire without an action was impossible, and many general officers who had thwarted Vendome, from blind deference to the duke of Burgundy, now loudly clamoured to be led against the enemy. Active preparations were accordingly made by the french commanders to repel a general attack, and the army drew up on the high ground of Lede, Huysse, and Maldeghem, in two lines, with a reserve. The greater part of the cavalry were posted on the right, opposite Oycke, the left

extended to behind Mullem, the front being covered by the Norken, and the defiles along its banks. Had they remained firm in this position, it is doubtful whether the confederate forces, after a long march of near five leagues, would have ventured to risk an attack that evening, and they might have retired in the night. But the duke of Burgundy and the clamorous officers were now as impatient to attack, as they were before desirous to remain on the defensive.

It was four in the afternoon, and the allies were not formed, when the duke of Burgundy directed general Grimaldi to lead 16 squadrons across the Norken, apparently for the purpose of reconnoitring whether the right wing could advance and occupy the space between the two rivulets at Diepenbeck and Chobon. Grimaldi came to the brink of the first rivulet, but made no attempt to pass; for observing the prussian cavalry already formed, and the british advancing, he fell back to the small plain near the mill of Royeghem. Vendome, who disapproved of this movement, which he foresaw would produce a conflict, in the very manner the allies wished to engage, had, nevertheless, directed his left to advance at the same moment, with a view of bringing both wings into action together. But the duke of Burgundy again countermanded his order, under pretence that an impassable morass separated the two armies on that side, although Vendome had himself traversed the pretended swamp only an hour before. Whatever was the cause, the left wing of the french remained

in position, and another invaluable hour was lost in useless movements.

Marlborough observing the right wing and centre of the enemy passing the defiles in their front, and forming irregularly, judged that they intended to attack him by the right. He conjectured that they would speedily advance towards the castle of Bevere, line the rivulet to Diepenbeck and Herlehem, and under cover of this manœuvre, bring their left into the plain of Heurne, where the squadrons of Rantzau, and some battalions of Cadogan were yet unsupported. Two battalions of the four, who had covered the bridges, had been already posted in the hedges near Groenevelde, where the first attack was expected. To keep the hostile right in check, they were reinforced by the twelve battalions of Cadogan, who had partly occupied Eyne and Heurne. Marlborough himself advanced by Heurne, with the prussian horse, and drew them up in front of the enemy. While this movement was in progress, the whole first column of the first line of the right wing, consisting entirely of british, formed rapidly on the height of Bevere.

At this moment 30 battalions of the enemy's right, among whom were the french and swiss foot-guards, the brigades du Roi, Picardi, and Royal Roussillon, debouched, as had been expected; and after some hesitation attacked the four battalions posted at Groenevelde, before the corps of Cadogan could arrive to sustain them. This small force, however, disputed the edge of the streamlet, and maintained their ground until

the other battalions arrived on their right, and boldly attacked the enemy's centre. The duke of Argyle, who led the british infantry, hastened also into action with 20 battalions, and a few pieces of cannon.* His left took post near Schaerken, and his right joined the infantry already engaged near Ruybroek and Groenevelde. A heavy conflict of musketry ensued, each battalion being engaged separately in the fields and enclosures which border the rivulet. The remaining part of the enemy's right, following the direction of the corps engaged, gradually prolonged their line, till they outflanked some prussian infantry on the left of the british, and after pushing them back, occupied Barwaen and the farm of Banlancy. But count Lottum, with the second column of infantry, consisting of prussians and hanoverians, had now likewise formed, and at six o'clock advanced in his turn, recovered the lost ground, and drove the enemy across the rivulet. As the lines extended, and the number of troops augmented, partial conflicts gradually increased into a general roar of musketry, which spread along the outer portion of the semicircle, formed by the two rivulets winding near Schaerken.

Marlborough and Eugene, who had hitherto remained together, now separated. The duke

* From the rapidity of the march, and the peculiarities of local situation, this memorable battle was fought with little aid from artillery on either side. The only pieces employed on the part of the allies, appear to have been those which accompanied the advanced detachment; and on the part of the french, we find reference to only six pieces. For this reason no allusion is made to the artillery in the Gazette and official accounts.

complimented the prince with the command of the right, comprising the british troops, whose valour he had often witnessed and applauded. He foresaw that the stress of the action would lie on this quarter, and therefore ordered count Lottum, with twenty battalions, to prolong his right, and strengthen the wing under Eugene. The opening which this movement occasioned, between the castle of Bevere and Schaerken, was filled up by eighteen battalions, drawn from the right of the left wing, who had just reached the scene of action, and formed across the Boser Couter, with the left in front of Mooreghem. Thus nearly sixty battalions fought under Eugene, while only twenty remained under the direction of the duke himself, in the centre.

The prince was warmly pressed, when the reinforcement arrived; for the corps of Cadogan, occupying a kind of focus in the centre of the hostile position, had been driven out of the coverts and avenues near Herlehem into the plain. With this accession of strength, Eugene, however, again advanced and broke the first line of the enemy. General Natzmer took an immediate advantage of the disorder; and at the head of the prussian gens d'armes and cuirassiers, charged through the second line into the small plain, near the chapel of Royeghem. But his career was checked by the household squadrons, and his ranks swept away by the fire of musketry which flashed from every hedge. After losing half his men, and receiving himself several sabre and gun-shot wounds, he

escaped with the utmost difficulty, by leaping over a broad ditch.

While the action thus raged with various success on the right, Marlborough, with the hanoverian and dutch battalions, pressed forward from the farm of Banlancy, and the hamlet of Barwaen. The enemy disputed every inch of ground, and set fire to some houses which they could no longer defend; but the gallant commander passed the nearest rivulet, and forced one inclosure after another, till he reached the hamlet of Diepenbeck. Here he encountered such obstinate resistance, that his troops were compelled to pause. His vigilant eye, however, discovered that the right of the enemy extended only to the steep acclivity of the hill of Oycke, and that they had neglected to occupy the commanding ground above. Of this error he did not fail to profit. Concluding that their right might be turned, and cut off from the main body, he requested marshal Overkirk, who had brought up the rear, with nearly all the cavalry of the left, and twenty battalions of dutch and danes, to execute this bold and decisive manœuvre.

The veteran hero, unmindful of his age and bodily infirmities, roused his expiring energy, and obeyed with equal alacrity and spirit. The last column of infantry having reached its ground, and deployed for battle, he directed general Week, with the brigade of dutch guards, and of Nassau Woudenburg, to force the ravines near the castle of Bevere. The troops moved rapidly to the attack, having the castle to their right, and after a vigorous conflict, drove back the enemy into the

coppices which fringe the banks of the rivulet. The prince of Orange and general Oxenstiern instantly followed with the remainder of the 20 battalions, ascended the Boser Couter, sustained by the cavalry under Overkirk and count Tilly, and formed with the left behind the mill of Oycke. Finding no enemy on the summit, the whole mass changed front to the right, and extended their left towards De Keele. The allied army thus formed a vast semicircle round the right wing of the enemy, who could only partially communicate with their centre and left, through the ravines and passes of Marolen, and by the mill of Royeghem.

This manœuvre being announced to the duke, he urged marshal Overkirk to make a farther effort with his left, and cut off the remaining communications of the enemy. The execution of this movement was intrusted to the young prince of Orange, whose impetuous spirit panted for distinction. Accompanied by general Oxenstiern, he rushed with the infantry down the height overlooking Marolen, penetrated through the defiles, and forming in two lines, was sustained by twelve squadrons of danes, under count Tilly. Here they encountered a corps of french grenadiers, supported by the household cavalry, and covered by the hedges which skirted the extremity of the plain. A series of vollies and charges ensued, and the enemy were evidently dismayed by so unexpected an attack on their rear.

The onset was visible from the right and centre. The frequent vollies of musketry re-echoed by the woods, and heightened by the growing darkness,

infused new ardour into the ranks of the allies, and equally damped the courage of the enemy. Cut off from their own army, the hostile troops slackened in their resistance, and were at length broken and driven back on each other. At this moment the french dragoons made a noble effort, to favour the escape of the infantry, and cover the retreat of the household squadrons; but their valour was fatal to themselves; for the greater part of seven regiments were either killed or taken, and the gendarmerie suffered no less severely from the charge of the danes.

Meanwhile Marlborough had continued to gain ground, and at length established his line between Chobon and Diepenbeck. Vendome indeed made a personal effort to avert the fate of the army which was intrusted to his care, by dismounting from his horse, and leading the infantry, near Mullem, to the rescue of their companions. But his exertions were unavailing. This body, inferior in numbers, subdued in spirit, masked by Eugene, and intangled by the intricacy of the ground, could make no impression; while the left wing was thrown out of action by the defiles and river in their front, and held in check by the british cavalry, which was drawn up in perfect order on the plain of Heurne.

In this crisis, darkness enveloped the contending hosts, and the positions were discernible only by the flashes of musketry which rolled round the narrowing circle of the devoted army, till the right of Eugene and the left of the prince of Orange approached the same point. They mistook each other for enemies, and their conflict might have

produced the most deplorable effects amidst the victorious ranks, had not the generals exerted themselves with unusual activity to put a timely stop to the fire. About nine, orders were given for the troops to halt as they stood, and suffer the enemy to escape, rather than expose themselves to mutual destruction. To this order numbers of the enemy owed their safety. Favoured by the obscurity, the broken corps forced their way in tumultuous crowds, as they were impelled by fear or despair. Some thousands slipped unperceived through an opening in the allied lines, near the castle of Bevere, and directed their flight towards the french frontier; others endeavoured to rejoin their left wing, in the direction of Mullem; and a considerable number wandered to the posts of the allies, and were captured. In the midst of this tumultuous scene, Eugene ordered several drummers to beat the french retreat, and the refugee officers to give the rallying word of the different corps, who were known to be in the inclosures; they thus succeeded in capturing crowds of fugitives without resistance.

When Vendome perceived the destruction of his right wing inevitable, he retired with the infantry, which was still posted on the bank of the Norken, near Mullem, and joined the left wing at Huysse and St. Denast, where they were grouped together in great disorder. With his characteristic presence of mind, he proposed to the duke of Burgundy, and a crowd of panic-struck generals, to take advantage of the night for restoring order among the troops, so as to retire regularly; but

his representations were fruitless. Finding therefore that his arguments could not persuade the reason, or allay the fears of the surrounding multitude, he consented to order a retreat. The word was no sooner given, than generals and privates, horse and foot, hurried in the utmost disorder towards Ghent. He could only persuade 25 squadrons and some battalions to remain united, and with these he covered the flight of the crowd in person.

The allies meanwhile impatiently paused on the field, but dawn was no sooner visible, than Marlborough detached 40 squadrons from the right wing, under generals Bulow and Lumley, and a corps of infantry, commanded by major-general Meredith, to pursue the enemy. With the return of day opened a scene of the most distressing nature, which gave scope to the humanity of the british general. Among several thousand corpses, lay a prodigious number of wounded of different nations, enveloped in carnage and surrounded with the wreck of war. By his orders the utmost exertion was instantly made to collect the survivors, and to bestow on all, without distinction, the care and relief which circumstances would permit. The agonies of suffering nature were thus soothed, and many were snatched from a lingering and painful death, to acknowledge the beneficence, and bless the name of their conqueror.*

* For the description and plan of this battle we are chiefly indebted to major Smith, who is well acquainted with the ground. The principal authorities, from which the narrative is drawn, are—Correspondence

Various and contradictory accounts have been given of the loss of the two parties in this memorable battle. But we may estimate that of the allies at about 3000 killed and wounded, and that of the enemy at no less than 4000 killed, 2000 wounded, and 9000 prisoners, including 700 officers.*

We find two letters from the duke, written in the first exultation of victory. One to the duchess deserves notice, because it proves that in his mind the joy of success was considerably allayed, by reflections on the perplexed state of affairs in England, and the perverseness of the queen.

"*July* 12. — I have neither spirits nor time to answer your three last letters: this being to bring the good news of a battle we had yesterday, in which it pleased God to give us, at last, the advantage. Our foot on both sides having been all engaged, has occasioned much blood; but I thank God the english have suffered less than any of the other troops; none of our english horse having been engaged. I do, and you must, give thanks to God for his goodness in protecting and making me the instrument of so much happiness to the

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of Marlborough — Letters and relations in the Gazette — Complete History of Europe — Lediard — Kane — Milner — Lives of Marlborough and Eugene — The french biographers — Unpublished letters from captain Bonnel of the artillery, and count Maffei — Observations of the french military writers and tacticians, particularly Quincy, Feuquières, and Grimoard — Vie du Prince Eugene.

* Berwick himself makes the number of prisoners amount to 9000 men. T. ii. p. 12.

queen and *nation, if she will please to make use of it.*"

The other to Godolphin is particularly interesting, because it shews that the attack on the hostile army was as daring, as the preparatory movements had been rapid and decisive; and that where the exigency of affairs required, our able commander over-stepped the established rules of military science, and surprised and disconcerted his antagonists, by efforts beyond the calculations of ordinary experience.

"*July* 12. — I have been so very uneasy, and in so great a hurry for some days, that I should not be able to write, were I not supported by the good success we had yesterday. The particulars you will have from lord Stair, who will give you this. You know his pretensions, and the friendship I have for him; and I will own to you, that I hope her majesty may have, by this message, an excuse for others, if she is pleased to * distinguish him at this time.

"I must ever acknowledge the goodness of God, in the success he was pleased to give us; for I believe lord Stair will tell you, they were in as strong a post as is possible to be found; but you know when I left England, I was positively resolved to endeavour by all means a battle, thinking nothing else would make the queen's business go on well. This reason only made me venture the battle yesterday, otherwise I did give them too much advantage; but the good of the

* By conferring on him a british peerage.

queen and my country shall always be preferred by me, before any personal concern; for I am very sensible if I had miscarried, I should have been blamed. I hope I have given such a blow to their foot, that they will not be able to fight any more this year. My head aches so terribly that I must say no more."

CHAPTER 70.

1708.

Offensive designs of the confederate generals.—Departure of Eugene for Brussels, to superintend the march of the artillery and stores.—Capture of the french lines between Ypres and Warneton.—Advance of Marlborough to Werwick.—Correspondence on military affairs, and on the state of the public mind in England.—Proposal of Marlborough to mask Lille, and penetrate into France—Opposed by Eugene, and counteracted by the dutch deputies.—Resolution taken to besiege Lille.—Projected descent on the french coast.

The two victorious commanders devoted little time to repose. The evening of the battle and the ensuing day were spent in concerting the necessary arrangements for their ulterior designs, and on the morning of the 13th Eugene departed to Brussels, for the purpose of forwarding the march of his army, which had already reached its vicinity. He was also to send out detachments for the protection of Flanders, and to superintend the conveyance of the heavy artillery and stores, which were to be drawn from Maestricht and the great towns of Holland.

Conscious that Berwick was hastening from the Moselle, Marlborough displayed his customary diligence. While the army remained on the field,

count Lottum was dispatched at midnight of the 13th, with fifty squadrons and thirty battalions, to possess himself of the lines, which the enemy had constructed from Ypres to Warneton, for the purpose of covering the country between the Scheld and the Lys. The main army followed in the morning, and took up a position between Beleghem and Hauterive, with the head quarters near Helchin. On the following day Marlborough resumed his march, and on his route had the satisfaction to receive intelligence that Lottum had forced the lines, captured Warneton, Comines, and Werwick, and made prisoners the whole guard left for the defence of the post, amounting to 500 men. This operation was effected at the very moment when Berwick was hastening to the spot, exhorting the officers to defend the lines to the last extremity, and announcing the approach of succours. Marlborough accordingly pressed forward, crossed the Lys near Menin, and on the evening of the 15th established his head quarters at Werwick, having his left at Comines, and his right extended towards Menin.

We insert several letters written from this camp, to his correspondents in England.

To the Duchess.

" *July* 16. — I hope before this you have had the news by lord Stair of the good success we had on last Wednesday. I have been obliged ever since to be in perpetual motion, so that I am a good deal out of order. I was in good hopes that the diligence I have made in getting into the french country (for I am now behind their lines), would

have obliged them to have abandoned Ghent; but as yet it has not had that effect, but on the contrary, M. de Vendome declares he will sacrifice a strong garrison rather than abandon that town, which, if he keeps his word, he will give me a great deal of trouble; for till we are masters of Ghent, we can have no cannon. The governor of Oudenard, to whom we sent our prisoners, assures me that the number is above seven thousand *, besides seven hundred officers; and we have a great many killed and wounded on both sides. They were forced to leave the greatest part of theirs on the place where they fought. We did take care to send all ours into Oudenard, after which I ordered that such of the french as were yet alive should be carried into the town. I have no account of what that number may be, but it being a wet night, I believe a great many of them suffered very much. If we had been so happy as to have had two more hours of day-light, I believe we should have made an end of this war. The duke of Berwick came to Lille the day before yesterday, but his troops will not be here these three or four days; those of prince Eugene came last night to Brussels, so that both our armies will be abundantly recruited. However, I believe the french will be careful not to venture any more this year; but the greatest mischief they can do is, the venturing all for the preserving of Ghent. I shall labour with pleasure the rest of this campaign, in hopes it may be the

* The reader will recollect that this letter was written only the day after the battle; and that the estimate here referred to, relates to the number of prisoners in Oudenard alone.

last, so that I may be blest with you and quietness."

To Lord Godolphin.

"*July* 16.—My blood is so extremely heated, that I must refer you to what Mr. Cardonel will write to the Secretary's office of what has passed since my lord Stair left the army. If we had been six hours later, I am afraid we should not have been able to have forced these lines; for M. de la Motte was got with his little army to Ypres, and the duke of Berwick was at the same time at Lille. We are now masters of marching where we please, but can make no siege till we are masters of Ghent, from whence only we can have our cannon. The camp the french are now in, behind the canal of Bruges, makes them entirely masters of Ghent and Bruges; but at the same time they leave all France open to us, which is what I flatter myself the king of France and his council will never suffer; so that I hope by Thursday, M. de Vendome will receive orders from court, not to continue in the camp where he is, from whence we are not able to force him but by famine.

"I am taking measures for attacking Ghent, as soon as he marches; and if the duke of Vendome's resolution of staying where he is, be approved at court, I shall then endeavour to cut off all provisions, as much as possible, from going to him; for if he stays, and we can ruin that army, France is undone; but if they can subsist longer than we can, they will be able by that, to hinder us from doing any thing considerable, for want of our cannon. Upon the whole, the hazard to them is

so very great, that I cannot think the king of France will venture it. Four or five days will let us see their intentions. In the mean time I shall take what rest I can, in order to be the better able to serve, for at this minute my head is so very hot, that I am obliged to leave off writing.

" Prince Eugene's foot came last night to Brussels. My humble duty to the queen."

" *July* 19. — I have this day had the favour of yours of the 28–9th and 2–13th of this month, and am very sorry to see that England is capable of being so easily frightened; for I dare say they have not one thousand men on all their coast. This country lies all open to us, but for want of cannon we are not able to do any thing considerable. One of our parties has burnt the suburbs of Arras. That and some other burnings have given a very great consternation, insomuch that they are already come to tell us, that they have sent to the king for leave to treat for the contributions. That which hinders us from acting with vigour is, that as long as the french are masters of Ghent, we cannot make use either of the Scheld or the Lys. But we are using our utmost endeavours to get some cannon by land, which meets with infinite difficulties; but we must overcome them, or we shall have very little fruit of our victory. The duke of Vendome is not contented with having the canal before him, but he is also retrenching, as if he intended to stay there the rest of this campaign. But when the king of France shall see that we have a probability of getting a battering train, I believe he will not let his own country be abandoned, for

the maintaining their treacherous conquest of Ghent.

" We have this day returned our solemn thanks to God, for the good success he has been pleased to give us; and in the evening the cannon and both lines fired three times.

" You know my opinion as to La Braconnière; but since he is come, I shall write to the elector of Hanover by him; but he must not be trusted with the project we hope to put in execution. I wish I may be mistaken, but I fear he has no other design but that of getting; however, I have promised him that Mr. Stanyan shall have thirteen blank commissions, which they may fill on the place. You will be pleased to speak to lord Sunderland to dispatch them; one must be for a colonel, and the other 12 for captains. These will cost her majesty only the trouble of putting her name, and if they should not be sent, he will pretend all would have succeeded, if he had had these commissions. Prince Eugene has desired me to write to you to hasten the 20 crowns a man for the 4000 foot; for till they receive that money they cannot begin to raise those men, which will be prejudicial to the service, so that I beg you will speak to the comte de Gallas about it."

Soon after his arrival at the camp of Werwick, Marlborough received numerous letters from his friends in England, congratulating him on the splendid victory, and announcing the appointment of another thanksgiving day, for the purpose of offering up to the Lord of Hosts the grateful acknowledgments of an exulting people. We intro-

duce two of these letters, one from Mr. Craggs, exhibiting the effusions of party malice, and the other from Godolphin, endeavouring to remove the impression which these malicious reports produced on his mind.

Mr. Craggs to the Duke of Marlborough.

"*London, July* 13.–24. — My lord; As your glorious conduct must have altered the face of affairs at Paris, so it has disconcerted a world of knavish politics and designs here; and I am sure every body that told your grace the truth, must allow there never was more stirring, which nothing under Heaven but your own great genius could have quelled. A very great peer was heard to say, that as this battle might be the occasion of reducing France, so it would give you such a power at home as might be very troublesome; or words to this effect.

"But I hope in God, as your valour has restored the crown to a power of giving protection, and doing justice to its subjects, that power will be maintained where it ought, in the queen and her ministers; for such deliverances from tyranny abroad, and anarchy at home, are not to be hoped for every day.

"There has been no mail from Holland since my lord Stair's arrival, and the accounts were so ill related for two or three days, that the fine schemers and their allies, the disaffected, began to find ten thousand reasons against a total defeat, or having any great consequences from it. But by my lord Stair's journal, and three mails which came from Ostend to-day, these wise well-meaning

persons have again changed their notes, and begin to cry Hosanna with the foremost. My lord, I do not speak this as my own observation only, but by the instigation of some very great and faithful friends of your grace's, that when the differences shall be accommodated, which they will now very easily be, those who have taken unreasonable opportunities to find unnecessary faults, may not carry it off with an air of having been the only or best well-wishers to the public good. For my own part, I have a full and perfect joy, that God Almighty has given these great blessings to us, by the means of your grace's unexampled conduct and valour, which, in defiance of all the envy, hatred, and malice which the devil can invent, or villainous man design, must be a pillar of glory to you and your memory, as long as annals and tradition do last, which brings me to beg leave to subscribe myself."

From Lord Godolphin.

"*Windsor, July* 23. * * * * Since I had written thus far, I have the favour of yours of the 26th, with the inclosed letter from M. Buys. You know so much of my apprehensions of the temper of M. Buys and his neighbours, that you will not be at all surprised, when I tell you I did not expect a letter less strong from him upon that occasion, taking it always for granted that they will endeavour to make use equally of good success, and of ill success toward their aim, which is peace; and on the other side, we must continue our endeavours as zealously, to keep them on as long as we can, in the expectation of farther advantages

by doing so. And I hope you will not, upon second thoughts, be so much disheartened by the idle notions and expectations of impossibilities, which you may hear of from hence. Something of this arises from malice and envy, and from a desire to raise expectations, which they think cannot be made good; and when the tories talk at this rate, these are the true reasons of it. But you will consider, besides, that it is the temper of our nation, confirmed by daily experience, that we are at the top of the house in prosperity; and in misfortune, indeed upon the least alarm, we are ready to sink into the earth."

But it was not the malice of his enemies, or the extravagant expectations of his admirers, that Marlborough had alone to regret; for attempts were even made to raise jealousies between him and Eugene, by exciting their emulation, and insinuating that justice had not been rendered to the merits of the german commander. These attempts were repulsed with becoming dignity by both parties; and Marlborough omitted no opportunity to bear testimony to the services of his colleague.

To count Zinzendorf he observes, July 18, "You will have doubtless heard that the prince of Savoy has been with us nearly a fortnight. His presence alone was the greatest advantage during the battle, of which he has given you an account by express. All his troops are on this side Brussels, where they render us essential service, by keeping the enemy in check, while we are so far in advance."

In another letter to Mr. Travers, one of the agents for superintending the disbursements at

Blenheim, he alludes more distinctly to the machinations which had been employed to create a misunderstanding.

" *Camp at Werwick, July* 30.— Sir ; I have received your favour of the 8th instant, and am obliged to you for your compliments on the late happy success, with which Providence has blessed the arms of her majesty and her allies, against the common enemy. I believe I need not tell you, how much I desire the nation may at last be eased of a burthensome war, by an honourable peace ; and no one can be a better judge than yourself of the sincerity of my wishes, to enjoy a little retirement at a place you have contributed, in a great measure, to the making so desirable. I thank you for your good wishes to myself on this occasion. *I dare say prince Eugene and I shall never differ about our share of laurels.* While the public has any real benefit of my services, I shall not be much concerned at any endeavours that may be used to lessen them.

" I thank you for your continued care and pains at Blenheim, and am with truth, &c."

Aware of the discontent which reigned in France, and the panic which prevailed in the defeated army, conscious also that some brilliant enterprise was necessary to prevent the dutch from listening to overtures of peace, Marlborough proposed to mask Lille, and penetrate through the northern frontier into the heart of France. Collaterally with this design a small expedition was fitted out in England, under general Erle, which was intended to act on the coast, and if a landing could be effected,

was to be supported by a detachment from the main army. But the design of penetrating directly into France was deemed too bold, even by Eugene, and of course encountered strong opposition from a government so timid and vacillating as that of Holland. Meanwhile, however, numerous detachments were sent out to excite alarm, by scouring the country and levying contributions; and the french commanders retaliated, by a similar irruption into the isle of Cadsand, which, besides the advantage of plunder, was expected to produce a great impression among the dutch.

The correspondence which occurs at this period, will not only exhibit the sentiments of the british commander, but will shew the utter impossibility of satisfying the extravagant expectations of his zealous admirers, and the difficulty of carrying even his own designs into execution.

To Lord Godolphin.

" *July* 23. * * * * We continue still under the great difficulty of getting cannon, for whilst the french continue at Ghent, we can make no use of the Scheld and Lys, which are the only two rivers that can be of use to us in this country. We have ordered twenty battering pieces to be brought from Maestricht, and we have taken measures for sixty more to be brought from Holland. The calculation of the number of draught horses, to draw this artillery, amounts to sixteen thousand horses, by which you will see the difficulties we meet with; but we hope to overcome them. In the mean time, we send daily parties into France, which occasions great terror; so that I cannot

think the court of France will suffer the duke of Vendome's army to continue where they are, as soon as they shall know we have a possibility of getting cannon; for by the intercepted letters we find that both in France, as well as in the duke of Vendome's army, they think it impossible for us to get a battering train, which makes them as yet bear the inroads of our troops into their country. I have this morning sent 1600 men to Armentières, for the greater security of our parties.

"I am very glad you have sent lieut.-general Erle to hasten the troops on board, for though the number is not great, they will much alarm the coast. I hope you will not determine to send these troops for Portugal, till we first see, whether they may not be of much more use on the coast of France. You know formerly you sent me a project for Abbeville; I have looked for it, but cannot find it. I should be glad you would send it me, for I think something of that kind might be practicable, and in that case, those troops, as well as the fleet, will be necessary.

"The duke of Vendome's army is so frightened, I am very confident if we could get them out of their retrenchments, and from behind the canal of Ghent and Bruges, we should beat them with half their numbers, especially their foot. This is one of their reasons for their staying where they are. It looks affected to be complaining in prosperity, but I have so many vexations, that I am quite tired, and long extremely for a little ease and quiet.

"It has happened upon the Rhine as I formerly

writ you, and the french talk of having another detachment from thence. This that the duke of Berwick has brought, consists of 55 squadrons and 34 battalions. He has been obliged to put some of his troops into Lille and Tournay, and is encamped with the rest at Douay."

"*July* 26. — Since my last I have received the inclosed by M. Buys. You will by it see the inclinations of the burgomasters of Amsterdam. Whenever their inclinations shall be known, you may depend upon it that the States will be of the same opinion; for let our success be what it will this campaign, I find the States are determined for peace, which I am afraid the king of France knows. By our news from Paris, Tortosa was taken the 11th, so that the troops from Italy will come too late. You may see by the Paris Gazette the turn they give to the battle of Oudenard, taking no notice of the 706 officers, nor the 7000 prisoners. We have also taken 95 colours and standards, besides three the prussians keep to send to their king; but that which is our greatest advantage is, the terror that is in their army, so that it were to be wished that we could get near them.

"What you apprehend, in yours of the 8th, of the States is very just; for by what I hear from Buys, it is plain that they think enough is done for peace, and I am afraid they will not willingly give their consent for the marching their army into France, which certainly, if it succeeded, would put a happy end to the war. I have acquainted prince Eugene with the earnest desire we have for our marching into France. He thinks it imprac-

ticable, till we have Lille for a *place d'armes* and magazine; and then he thinks we may make a very great inroad, but not be able to winter, though we might be helped by the fleet, unless we were masters of some fortified town. If it depended upon pensionary Heinsius, he is so honest a man that he would not at this time think of peace; but he is in his nature so timorous, that he will never contradict, whatever the inclinations of the States may be. The letter I send you from M. Buys was written before they knew of the loss of Tortosa, by which you may be sure their inclinations for peace will increase. I am assured that if this action had not happened, some proposal of peace was to have been made towards the end of August.

"You will very easily believe me, when I tell you that I am a good deal vexed and mortified, to see that finding fault is more natural than helping to ease those that are forced to serve the public; for I see by my letters from England, that if impossibilities are not done, after this success, your humble servant is to be blamed. I beg you to consider our situation. We are in a country where the duke de Berwick, and M. de Bernier, the intendant, in the king's name, order all the people to abandon their dwellings and retire to the strong towns. This, joined with the difficulty of getting cannon, makes me uneasy to the last degree. It is most certain, that the success we had at Oudenard has lessened their army at least 20,000 men; but that which I think our greatest advantage, consists in the fear that is

among their troops, so that I shall seek all occasions of attacking them. But their army is far from being inconsiderable, for when the duke of Burgundy's army shall join that of the duke of Berwick, they will be at least one hundred thousand men. If it had pleased God that we had had one hour's day-light more at Oudenard, we had, in all likelihood, made an end of this war. This is the true state of our condition, which is proper for the queen to know; and I beg you to assure her majesty, that I shall endeavour every thing that I think may be for the public good and her service. In my last letter you have had my thoughts as to the expedition. I long to hear they are sailed."

To the Duchess.

"*July* 26.—Since my last I have the happiness of yours of 8th (O. S.) By that and some others from England, I find much more is expected from the success it has pleased God to give us, than I am afraid is possible. I am sure you and my friends are so just and kind, as to believe that I shall do my best. I have the advantage of having prince Eugene and very good troops, but our difficulties are much greater than can be imagined in England. I no ways doubt but the tories will endeavour all they can to vex me, but I hope the whigs will support me in this war, and then I don't doubt but to bring France to such a peace as they desire; but to effect it there must be one campaign more after this. This is not only my opinion, but the opinion also of prince Eugene, which I desire you will let lord Sunderland know, and that I desire he would acquaint

his friends with it, particularly lord Halifax and lord Somers, and lord Wharton, if he be in town, after which, I should be glad to hear from him on this subject; for prince Eugene and I consult daily, not only how to end this campaign, but also the war, with advantage; so that it will be of great use for me to know the opinions of those lords. You will see by the date of the inclosed letter, that I should have sent it you some time ago; but I have been in so continual a hurry, that for this, and I am afraid, other omissions, that must be my excuse. I must end my letter with assuring you, that I am very sorry for what you mention in the beginning of your letter, of the fondness of the queen for Mrs. Masham; I do not mean it as a thing that may vex you or me, but as a thing that must at last have very ill consequences. I should have been glad on this occasion to have had a letter from the duke of Devonshire, so that I might, in some degree, have made amends for my last."

To Lord Godolphin.

"*July* 30.—We continue under very great difficulties of getting our cannon. Lille, Ypres, and Tournay, which should have furnished 5000 horses, have received positive orders to furnish none; so that I am afraid, we shall be obliged to bring from Brussels at twice, what we were in hopes to have done at once, which must lose a great deal of time. We are assured that the dukes of Burgundy and Vendome have obtained the king of France's consent to continue in their camp behind the canal of Bruges and Ghent, they having

assured him that it will not be in our power to do any thing considerable, but the settling some contributions, and the plundering the country, as long as they continue masters, by the situation of the town of Ghent, of the two rivers of the Scheld and Lys. They have another reason, which they do not give, for their staying where they are, which is, that they dare not trust their men in any camp, where we might be able to come to them.

" M. de Boufflers is come to his government of Lille. I hope he will not have better success than he had at Namur *, if we were once so happy as to get our cannon. M. de Chamillard was yesterday at Lille, and it is said he is gone to-day to Valenciennes. The alarm in France is very great, so that we should bring them to reasonable terms, if Holland would let us act as we ought to do. But I hear this evening that the french have forced their passage into the isle of Cadsand, which will give alarms to Zealand, and consequently make great noise at the Hague, and might occasion some unreasonable resolution, which might make us incapable of acting in this country. My only hopes are, that their eagerness for contribution may incline them to suffer a little, and let us act with the troops we have, we having already settled five hundred thousand crowns for the country of Artois, and we hope to get them much more from Picardy. This being a contribution that is likely to last as long as the war, I did flatter myself it might have inclined them to continue the war till we might have had a good peace. We shall now

* He was commandant of Namur when it was taken by king William.

see what use the party that is for peace will make of the french being in the isle of Cadsand."

" *August* 2. — I thank you for lord Coningsby's letter, and send it back, not knowing but you may think it proper to shew it to the queen, if you have not already done it. I wish her so well, that I would be glad she might know what is in every body's heart.

" The delay that has been occasioned by cross winds to the embarkation, is a great *contre-tems;* but as I think most things are governed by destiny, having done all that is possible, one should submit with patience.

" We have got great part of our cannon to Brussels, so that now our greatest application is to have it here. The alarm the french have given by getting into the isle of Cadsand, has weakened our army of eleven battalions. As yet, we do not know what effect it has had in Holland; but. no doubt, those that are for a peace, will endeavour to make all the noise they can. We have an account that our parties have occasioned very great terror in Picardy, and that they exclaim very much against M. de Vendome staying where he is; but by the measures he takes, there can be no doubt of his intention of staying there all this campaign. If we can succeed in our undertakings, we must not think of winter quarters, till we have obliged him to quit that country. It must be by force, for it is not in our power to hinder them from having subsistence, even for the whole winter, if they should be permitted to stay."

Meanwhile count Lottum had accomplished the

demolition of the french works, and rejoining the main army, took post on the left, prolonging the line to Pont Rouge, near the confluence of the Marquette and the Lys. The heavy baggage, which had been left at Brussels before the engagement, was brought in safety to the camp, by the precautions of the duke. Having thus effected the re-union of his troops, and secured the requisites for the comfort and subsistence of the army, Marlborough turned his attention to the means of prosecuting his success.

To Lord Godolphin.

" *August* 3.—I have this morning received yours of the 18th by the express. I must refer you to Mr. Secretary's letter, by which you will see prince Eugene's and my opinion. I have spoke of it to nobody but the prince; for by several observations I have of late made of the deputies of our army, I am afraid the States would not be for this expedition, nor any thing else, where there is a venture; by which, I am confident they think themselves sure of peace, the thoughts of which may ruin themselves and the allies, for I verily believe the intention of the king of France is to amuse them, in order to gain time. After we have succeeded at Lille, and that we shall think it feasible to support the project of Abbeville, I should agree with you that lieut.-general Erle should have the chief command during this winter, so that he should endeavour to inform himself of the number of troops that will be necessary for the supporting him in that post; for as one of the difficulties will be his subsistence, he

must not ask for more men than what are absolutely necessary.

" You will see by Mr. Secretary's letter, that we are taking the best measures we can for the security of our cannon, which the enemy threatens; but I hope we are in no danger, prince Eugene having for their security 90 squadrons and 53 battalions; and if the duke of Vendome should march with his whole army, I am ready to follow with the troops that remain with me. I am in haste to send this messenger, that no time may be lost in sending Erle to the coast of Normandy."

We add other letters, because they throw light on the offensive projects of the british commander, particularly the proposed descent on the french coast.

To Secretary Boyle.

" *August* 3. — I received this morning the honour of your letter of the 18th of July, and have kept the messenger no longer than was necessary to advise with prince Eugene, and to return you our opinions relating to the project. You know already, that by the unanimous concurrence of the States, and of the chief generals of the army, in the present juncture, the siege of Lille has been thought preferable to any other operation; and you cannot be insensible, from my several letters, of the difficulties we have been struggling with, for this fortnight, and more, to get the greatest part of our heavy artillery to Brussels, which being happily effected, the prince is going to-day with 25 battalions and 25 squadrons from hence, to strengthen his army, in order to bring the artillery

forward. This being our present situation, both the prince and myself are of opinion, it will be impossible for us to take any just measures for seconding lieut.-general Erle's design upon Abbeville, till we are masters of Lille, and that therefore the fleet, with the troops, should go directly to the coast of Normandy, and land and make what impression they can there, till the siege be over; and then I shall give you timely notice when it may be proper to come this way. For we are of opinion no attempt should be made upon Abbeville, nor the least jealousy given that way, till towards the end of September, that our people may have the winter season to favour them to keep their ground; for it is certain the french will use their utmost endeavours, if the weather will permit, to force them on board again. In the mean time, you will do well to advise with such french people as may be perfectly acquainted with the place, and the country thereabout, what number of troops may be sufficient to maintain the post all the winter. You must consider withal, that they may be supplied with provisions from England, for no doubt the enemy will block them up so close, that they can have little or no assistance from the country. Now, after all, this project must depend upon our success at Lille, and then if it shall be thought practicable, and can be executed, we must certainly reap a very great advantage by it, by joining them with a good body of troops in the Spring, and carrying the war into the heart of France. As I have dispatched the messenger back again, as soon as

possible, and directed him to use his utmost diligence, I hope he will arrive in time before the fleet sails, that they may receive the necessary instructions. You will please to lay this, with my humble duty, before her majesty and the lords of the council. I am truly, &c."

To General Erle.

"*Camp at Werwick, August* 6.—Sir; On Friday last one of the queen's messengers arrived here, and brought me a letter of the 18th of July, with the project that by yours just now come in of the 20th, I understand was communicated to you and sir George Byng that day at Windsor. I dispatched the messenger back the same morning, with my reasons against that project, which I dare answer will be approved by her majesty and the council, since I acquaint them we are no ways in a condition here, at present, to second those designs; and seeing by these last letters, you were put to sea with all expedition, so that I fear the messenger may not arrive in time for you to receive instructions from court, I send this off from the coast of Flanders, to advise you and sir George Byng of it, that you may not pursue your last instructions, but follow those that were given you first for the coast of Normandy or Britanny; and I hope, if need be, towards the end of the next month, we may be in a posture of seconding you nearer hand."

To Lord Godolphin.

"*August* 6.—Since my last, I have received yours of the 20th, as also the instructions of lieut.-general Erle, which makes me in pain, fearing he may be landed before he receives contrary orders,

which I hope were sent as soon as you received mine of the 3d, it being impossible for us to send any detachment till our siege was over. I earnestly desire that, though he should be landed, you will send orders for their re-embarking, and that they lose no time in going to the coast of Normandy. I shall endeavour to send to Mr. Erle, but it will be great odds it never comes to him, so that nothing is to be relied on but one of the queen's ships. I am in hourly expectation of hearing that our cannon left Brussels this day. The french have several detachments abroad, in order to trouble the march, but I hope to no purpose; for the prince's army is now strengthened from hence by 47 squadrons and 30 battalions, so that I reckon he has 50,000 men with him.

"By some letters from England I find, in all manner of ways I am to be found fault with; for when I am lucky, I am negligent, and do not make use of the occasion; and if I should ever prove unfortunate, no doubt I should run the risk of being a fool or traitor. In my opinion, it is high time for me to think of retiring, by which I should be in nobody's power; but I will take no resolution, except by the advice of the queen and you; but I hope you will allow me to do it this next winter, which may be a proper time, if what I hear from the Hague be true, which is, that they are resolved to have peace."

CHAPTER 71.

1708.

Continuation of the correspondence on the political feuds. — Increasing contentions between the duchess and the queen. — Their violent altercation soon after the thanksgiving for the victory of Oudenard. — Visible decline of the favour enjoyed by the duchess. — She adopts the resolution of suspending her correspondence and remonstrances with the queen.

The duke of Marlborough being stationary for a month at the camp of Werwick, and the military movements suspended, we take this opportunity of resuming our account of the political feuds, and of introducing the interesting correspondence which passed with the queen and his friends in England.

In the midst of the cares and anxieties attendant on the great operations which he was now directing, Marlborough was still fruitlessly employed in combating the prejudices of the queen, and labouring to promote the cause of the party, to whose injurious suspicions and acrimonious reproaches he was continually exposed. Discouraged, however, by the ill success of his own representations, and wearied by the importunities of the duchess and Godolphin, who complained of the instances he had already made, as too lukewarm for the occasion, he forwarded to them the letters which he

received from the queen, with draughts of his intended answers, and requested them to furnish for his replies, such hints and arguments as their intimate knowledge of the state of the court and parties might suggest. Accordingly we find at this period several draughts of letters, in the handwriting of the duchess and Godolphin, relating to the topics which had lately been the incessant subjects of discussion and correspondence. Some of these he appears to have adopted, others his better judgment rejected; and the different modifications and changes which he made in their draughts, as well as in his own letters, heighten our respect for his loyalty, circumspection, and firmness.

The discussion relative to the promotion of Somers, and the other demands of the whigs, which had been suspended in the midst of the preparations for battle, was revived with redoubled warmth, as soon as the assurance of victory had given a temporary relaxation to his anxious mind.

From Lord Godolphin.

"*Windsor, July* 6.–17., *at night.* — I have troubled you this morning with so long a letter, that I shall only make use of this opportunity of inclosing a letter from the queen, to tell you that when you answer it, I wish, in case you are of my opinion, you would take that occasion to let her see, that when God has blessed her arms with so great success, it would be a right time for her to shew mercy and forgiveness to those who may have displeased her, and to put an end to her resentment against sir J. Montague, which is a thing

extremely prejudicial to her service; and I have hitherto been but just able to keep her from coming to extremities in it, with all the industry and skill imaginable."

To the Duchess.

"*July* 19.—Since my last I have had none from you; but having had for some time two or three of your former letters to answer, I begin this morning very early, tho' the letters do not go till the evening, so that I may hear from you before this is sealed.

"You give me an account in one of yours of a conversation * that the duke of Somerset had with lord Wharton; and by the latter's answer, it looks as if he thought that the duke of Somerset spoke the thoughts of the lord treasurer and mine. You know that I have already assured you, that I shall be very far from endeavouring to divide the whigs; and I beg you will have so kind an opinion of me, as to believe I can't be so indiscreet as to employ the duke of Somerset in any thing that is of consequence. You seem to think that the design of removing lord Sunderland is over, but by the two inclosed letters I think it is not. My not being well, the battle, and the hurry I have been in, has been my excuse hitherto for my not having answered either of them. I beg that you will let

* The duke here alludes to a conversation in which the duke of Somerset endeavoured to lure Wharton from his party, by the offer of some post under the government, and justified the queen's exclusion of lord Somers, on the plea that he had personally offended the prince of Denmark. Lord Wharton contemptuously rejected the overture. An account of this conversation is given in one of Mr. Maynwaring's letters to the duchess.

nobody know that I send them to you, only Mr. Montgomery, with whom I desire you will advise what answer I should give.

"I am very sorry to see by yours that the queen is fonder of Mrs. Masham than ever; I am sure, as long as that is, there can be no happiness, I mean quietness.

"By what you write me of lady Tyrconnel*, I believe her discourse to you has been much the same as it was with me, which was, not to rely upon any body, and persuading me to think the government of this country to be the greatest and happiest thing that could happen to me. I could also perceive that she thought you and I were not so well with the queen as formerly. I do not wonder at that, for I believe it is the opinion of every body; but if I can end this war well, and you are kind, nothing can make me unhappy.

"Having writ thus far, I have received your two letters of the 28th of the last month, and the 2d of this. The two inclosed you have sent me of Mrs. Morley's are as one would wish; but I think, in prudence, you must not seem to have any doubts, and that may in length of time enable you to do good to the nation and the queen. I am very sensible of the very unreasonable opiniatrety of the queen; however, knowing the faults of those which were before her, and what, I fear, will be in those that are to follow her, I do from my

* Lady Tyrconnel, the sister of the duchess, was at this period allowed to return to England, to obtain the payment of her jointure, which had run in arrear, in consequence of her absence abroad, and the exile of her deceased husband, for his attachment to the dethroned sovereign.

heart wish her a long and prosperous reign, so that you must take pains; for the happiness of England depends upon her doing what is right and just. Besides my love to my country, I own to you I have a tenderness for the queen, being persuaded that it is the fault of those whom she loves, and not her own, when she does what is wrong. God has been pleased to make me the instrument of doing her again some service; *I wish she may make a right use of it.* I send you back your two letters, as you desire, with the two writ to me, which I again beg nobody may know but Mr. *Montgomery.*"

To the Queen.

[In reply to her congratulatory letter of July 6. O.S.]

"*July* 23.—Madam; I have the honour of your majesty's letter of the 6th, and am very thankful for all your goodness to me; and I am sure it will always be my intention, as well as duty, to be ready to venture my life for your service.

"As I have formerly told your majesty that I am desirous to serve you in the army, but not as a minister, I am every day more and more confirmed in that opinion. And I think myself obliged, upon all accounts, on this occasion, to speak my mind freely to you. The circumstances in this last battle, I think, shew the hand of God; for we were obliged not only to march five leagues that morning, but to pass a river before the enemy, and to engage them before the whole army was passed, which was a visible mark of the favour of Heaven to you and your arms. Your majesty shall be convinced from this time, that I have no ambition, or

any thing to ask for myself or family; but I will end the few years which I have to live, in endeavouring to serve you, and to give God Almighty thanks for his infinite goodness to me. But as I have taken this resolution to myself, give me leave to say, that I think you are obliged, in conscience, and as a good christian, to forgive, and to have no more resentments to any particular person or party, but to make use of such as will carry on this just war with vigour, which is the only way to preserve our religion and liberties, and the crown on your head; which, that you may long enjoy, and be a blessing to your people, shall be the constant wish and prayer of him, that is with the greatest truth and duty." *

The letter of July 12. which Marlborough had written on the field of battle to the duchess, was communicated by her to the queen, and she accompanied it with a commentary, containing the severest reflections on the ungrateful return which her majesty had made to the instrument of such success. She even indulged herself in pointed censures against admiral Churchill, whom she indirectly accused of exerting his influence to the detriment of his own brother, and then launched out into a still more acrimonious invective against Mrs. Masham.

This imprudent effusion did not tend to soothe the wounded feelings of the irritated sovereign. She not only replied in a style of similar invective, but wrote to the duke himself, adverting to the

* Printed in the Conduct, p. 258.

misconstrued expression in his letter, and justifying her own conduct.

" *Windsor, July* 13.–24. — I cannot let lord Stair go without giving him a letter, and assuring you, that as soon as it is convenient for my affairs, I will do for him what he desires * ; and, indeed, I think I owe it to him, he certainly having lost his election in Scotland, by being at that time doing his duty in Flanders.

" We have had the satisfaction to-day of hearing more good news by the way of Ostend, and I hope to-morrow we shall have it confirmed from you, and that I shall have another letter to thank you for by the next. I was shewed a letter the other day, by a friend of yours, that you writ soon after the battle, and I must beg you will explain to me one expression in it. You say, after being thankful for being the instrument of so much good to the nation and me, if *I would please to make use of it.* I am sure I will never make an ill use of so great a blessing, but according to the best of my understanding, make the best use of it I can, and should be glad to know what is the use you would have me make of it, and then I will tell you my thoughts very freely and sincerely.

" I will not trouble you with any more now, but I beg you would never have any doubts of my sincere esteem and friendship for you, which I do assure you shall be lasting as my life."

To the Duchess.

" *August* 2.—The inclosed I send, you will see

* This was a request of Marlborough that he should be raised to the british peerage.

is from Mrs. Morley. I have altered my answer, since I received yours of the 16th. What I write is the truth of my heart; nobody must see them but Mr. Montgomery. You must keep all her letters and my answers, for I keep no copies, and you must be careful in the conversations you have, not to let her think that you have any account of her letters; for that would make her more shy when she writes.

" I am afraid what you say of Abigail is but too true, but we must, for our own reputation, have all the consideration imaginable for the queen. I believe it is in the power of Mrs. Masham to do very ill offices, but I do not think she could get the blue ribbon for any body.

" Lord Raby is in friendship with Mr. Harley and all that cabal, so that I hope lord treasurer will give him as little countenance as possible.

" What you wish in yours of the 13th, of my being able to make so good a campaign this year, that I might never more stir out of England, I do with all my soul wish it; but I dare not flatter myself it will be so, for I fear there must be one year more to make a good peace. I am sorry that my brother George is gone to Oxford, fearing he may do what I shall not like. I can't hinder being concerned for him, tho' I find he is not at all sensible of the trouble he is like to have this winter, so that I shall certainly have mortifications upon his account.

" Having ended my letter, I received yours of the 16th, so that I am obliged to make some alteration in my answer, that it might agree with what you

sent me. I have corrected my copy, and have marked in yours what I have left out, believing that would rather do hurt than good; for I know the queen would venture every thing to effect the dividing of the whigs; so that those expressions would have no other effect but that of encouraging her to go on in the fatal way she is now in. This is my opinion, but I submit to better judgment.

"You may from me assure lord Sunderland, that I will always be in the interest of the whigs, with which assurance I desire he would acquaint lord Halifax, lord Somers, and lord Wharton; and at the same time, for their sakes, and that of the public, as well as my own reputation, I must be master of judging of my actions towards the queen; for sooner or later we must have her out of the hands of Mrs. Masham, or every thing will be labour in vain."

To the Queen.

"Madam; *August 2.*

"The uneasiness of my mind upon receiving your majesty's letters of the 18th and 22d of June, had such an effect upon my body as to make me very ill, till it pleased God to bless me with such good success, as in great measure recovered me; though my sickness before the battle, and the hurry in which I have been almost ever since, joined with the uneasiness of the subject, have hindered me from returning your majesty an answer so soon as I ought to have done. I was glad to observe that the impressions, which your majesty seemed to have in yours of the 18th, of my lord Sunderland's having

made use of your name in his letters to Scotland, had been so far set right, by the assurances he gave you, as to let you see all possible endeavours had been used from thence to incense you against him. And though he may have done, upon that occasion, what your majesty does not like, yet I beg leave to say, with all humility and duty to your majesty, that I did flatter myself nobody could have prevailed with you, to carry your resentment so far against him in my absence, as is mentioned in your letters, and to give me so great a mortification in the face of all Europe, at a time when I was so zealously endeavouring to serve you at the hazard, both of my reputation and of my blood. But though any consideration of me were wholly out of the case, I should think, for your own sake, you would suspend any farther resentment in this matter till I have the honour to see you, and opportunity of thoroughly examining and discoursing upon it with your majesty. For God's sake, madam, consider, that whatever may be said to amuse or delude you, it is utterly impossible for you ever to have more than a part of the tories; and though you could have them all, their number is not capable of doing you good.* These things are so plain, that I can't doubt but your majesty will be

* The following words were here omitted, for the reason which he assigns in the preceding letter to the duchess: —

"Not more than their inclinations. They can do you hurt by making the whigs jealous and uneasy, and that is their great aim; for they know that must have the consequence of dividing the whigs, and by that means enabling them to cast the balance on the side of those who are, and always will be, in opposition to your majesty's administration and government."

convinced nothing can be so fatal to your service, as any way to discourage the whigs, at this time, when after the blessing of this victory, you may be sure, that if you shew a confidence in their zeal for your interests, they will all concur very cheerfully to make you great and happy, as I wish. God Almighty bless and preserve you.

" I had writ thus far before I had the honour of your majesty's of the 13th, by lord Stair, and as I shall always endeavour to deserve from your majesty, so I shall never doubt of having your esteem and protection. Your majesty might see by the shortness of the letter that was shewn you, that I was in great haste when I writ it, and my fulness of heart for your service made me use that expression. What I then meant, as I must always think is, that you can make no good use of this victory, nor of any other blessing, but by following the advice of my lord treasurer, who has been so long faithful to you ; for any other advisers do but lead you into a labyrinth, to play their own game at your expence. Nothing but your commands should have obliged me to say so much, having taken my resolution to suffer with you, but not to advise, being sensible that if there was not something very extraordinary, your majesty would follow the advice of those that have served you so long, faithfully, and with success." *

* From the endorsement of the duchess, it appears that the draught of this letter was written by the duke, and transmitted to her and the treasurer for their approbation. It was returned, with corrections and additions, and the copy of the letter which was apparently sent, exists in the hand-writing of the duchess, with the parts which were omitted by the duke, interlined. The postscript was written by the duke himself, on the impulse of the moment.

From the Queen, in reply. *

" I received yours of the 2.–13th of this month on Saturday last, which was in answer to three of mine. I am very sorry to find you persist in your resolution of not advising me concerning my home affairs; but I would beg your pardon for disobeying your commands in that particular, it being impossible for me, who have on all occasions spoke and writ my mind very freely, as I think every friend ought to do to one another, to forbear doing the same still, and asking your opinion in every thing; there being nobody but you and lord treasurer that I do advise with, nor can rely on, which I will yet hope you will believe, since I tell you so, you having more than once or twice assured me you would credit what I said. Though I must confess, by what I am told every day of my being influenced by Mr. Harley, through a relation of his, and your saying you are sensible that if there were not something very extraordinary, I should follow the advice of lord treasurer and you, I fear you have not a thorough good opinion of me, and if that be so, it is in vain for me to say any thing. However, I can't help asking, why my not complying with some things that are desired, and which you know I have ever been against, should be imputed to something extraordinary? Is not one body of one opinion, and *one of another?* and why then should it be wonderful, that you and I should differ in some things, as well as other people, especially since my thoughts are the same

* From a copy in the hand of the duchess.

of the whigs, that ever they were from the time that ever I have been capable of having notions of things and people; and I must own, I can see no reason to alter mine.

"Since I began this letter, I have the satisfaction of receiving yours of the 9th *, by lord treasurer, who is just come out of the country. I am very sorry that your health is not yet confirmed. I beg you would be careful both of preserving that and your person, which is of so much consequence to me, and more sincerely and truly valued and esteemed by me than can be expressed. I have had so many hindrances since I began to write, that I can't say so much as I intended, nor any more to yours of the 9th, being in haste to send this to London, but must trouble you again some other time; till when, I beg you would be so just to me as to believe I am, and ever will be, your humble servant."

To the Duchess.

"*August* 6. — I had not time by the messenger to answer yours of the 17th which he brought me. As to what you say of my brother George, you will see by my former letters that I think him in as wrong measures as is possible. † It is a very

* This letter is missing.

† This passage alludes to a quarrel occasioned by the imprudent loquacity of admiral Churchill, who, with a view to mortify the whigs, circulated a report that the duke had given a regiment to a colonel Jones, at the secret instigation of Harley. He assigned, as his authority, the avowal of Mr. Robert Walpole, then secretary at war, and the confidential agent of the duke in all military affairs. The report, which was communicated to the queen and prince, by the admiral himself, created the greatest irritation on all sides, and was proved to be false. Mr. Walpole justified himself to his patron, in a letter, printed in the

great satisfaction the assurances you give me, that there will be care taken to make the mortification as easy as such a thing can bear; but in this country it must have a very bad effect as to my reputation, since he is my brother. I know not from whom you may have heard what you write, but I am sure Mr. Walpole ought to be satisfied with me; for I did say enough to him, that he might see that I was far from approving, but on the contrary, condemned the proceeding of my brother. The account you give me of the commerce and kindness of the queen to Mrs. Masham, is that which will at last bring all things to ruin; for by all you write, I see the queen is determined to support, and I believe, at last own her. I am of the opinion I ever was of, that the queen will not be made sensible, or frightened out of this passion; but I can't but think some ways might be found to make Mrs. Masham very much afraid. The discovery you have made of the queen's having the opinion that she has friends which will support her, can be no other than the tories; and it is true, they would ruin lord treasurer and me, and will be able to bring it about, if it can be thought ruin, to be put in the condition of quietness, which

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Memoirs of his Life and Administration, v. xi. p. 9.; and in a second letter, dated June 29. (still preserved in the Marlborough papers). The duke not only condemned the conduct of his brother, but endeavoured to soothe the wounded feelings of Walpole, as well as to exonerate himself from the censure, which the report was calculated to excite among the whigs. The extreme dissatisfaction of all parties is proved by the sensation which an incident so comparatively trifling produced, and evinces the embarrassment which Marlborough encountered from the imprudence of his brother.

of all things I wish for; but not to be forced to it, which I shall certainly be, if Mrs. Masham remains in that credit you say, and I believe, she has with the queen.

" I find you are in pain for my not being able to make use of the letter you sent me. You will by the last post have seen how I have made use of it, tho' I said nothing by way of excuse in my letter to Mrs. Morley. I did it by the same post to Mr. Montgomery, in the letter of the 23d, with which he acquainted Mrs. Morley, without doubt, so that my letter may come very naturally to her.

" What I hear from the Hague is, that those people are resolved to have peace on any conditions. This may prove fatal, but if they are determined, we shall find it very difficult to hinder it, so that you will let me have your thoughts how we may be most at ease. For when that happens, I believe nobody will be against my living quietly with you, and then the court may govern as they please, the consequence of which, I would flatter myself will be, that we shall then be more esteemed by our friends as well as enemies; for the temper of England is such, that nobody in any great station can be liked; for if they are lucky, they do not make use enough of their advantage; if unfortunate, they run the risk of being called fools and traitors.

" You will know from hence the public news in the printed papers. By my letters yesterday from Cadogan, I am in hopes the cannon may begin their march from Brussels to-day or to-morrow.

" Since I had finished this letter, I have received yours of the 20th, and have only time to assure

you, that I am fully convinced that the tories would ruin me. You know my resolutions by my former letters, of being firm to the whigs; and if they support the queen, they will make me more capable of serving them and my country."

The last letter written by Marlborough drew from the queen a reply, in a more ungracious style than the preceding. It appears to have been destroyed at his request, but we may judge of its tone and contents, by the deep impression which it produced on his mind.

To the Duchess.

"*August* 9.—I have had the happiness of yours of the 23d; by the same post Mr. Montgomery sent me one from Mrs. Morley.

"I have had a good deal of struggle with myself whether I should burn it, or send it you to shew lord treasurer. As I would have you two know every thing, that you might be the better able to act rightly, I have inclosed the letter I have received from the queen; but I must conjure you that you will not, in your discourse, or any other way, let any body know the contents of this letter, which has thoroughly convinced me that there is no washing a blackamoor white, and that we must expect this next winter all the disagreeableness imaginable; for the tories have got the heart and entire possession of the queen, which they will be able to maintain, as long as Mrs. Masham has credit.

"I do earnestly beg, when Mr. Montgomery has read Mrs. Morley's letter and this of mine to you, that they may both be torn to pieces, so that

they may never hurt Mrs. Morley, whom I can't but love, and endeavour to serve, as long as I have life; for I know this is not her fault, otherwise than by being too fond of Mrs. Masham, who imposes upon her."

In the course of this arduous struggle, the whigs became more inflamed, in proportion to the resistance of the queen. Disappointed of the effects which they expected from their preceding manœuvres, they resumed, with increasing warmth, the proposal of an invitation to the electoral prince, and endeavoured to gain the acquiescence of Marlborough. This imprudent design did not escape the notice of their political antagonists, who availed themselves of a topic so disagreeable, to increase the resentment of the sovereign. Lord Haversham even waited on the queen to communicate the unwelcome intelligence, and wrought on her timidity, by dwelling on the necessity to which she would be reduced, of proposing the invitation herself. *

The queen, in the agony of her mind, communicated to Marlborough the information which she received from lord Haversham, less from a motive of confidence, than from a wish to employ his influence in averting the expected mortification.

"*July 22. O. S.*—I cannot end this without giving you an account, in short, of a visit I had from lord Haversham. He told me his business was, to let me know there was certainly a design laying between the whigs and some great men, to

* Letter from lord Godolphin, Windsor, July 30.

have an address made in the next session of parliament, for inviting the electoral prince over to settle here; and that he would certainly come to make a visit, as soon as the campaign was over. And that there was nothing for me to do, to prevent my being forced to do this (as I certainly would), but by shewing myself to be queen, and making it my own act. I told him, if this matter should be brought into parliament, whoever proposed it, whether whig or tory, I should look upon neither of them as my friends, nor would ever make any invitation, neither to the young man, nor his father, nor his grandmother.

"What I have to say upon this subject, at this time, is, to beg you would find whether there is any design where you are, that the young man should make a visit in the winter; and contrive some way to put any such thought out of his head, that the difficulty may not be brought upon me, of refusing him leave to come, if he should ask it, or forbidding him to come, if he should attempt it; for one of these two things I must do, if either he or his father should have any desires to have him see this country, it being a thing I cannot bear, to have any successor here, though but for a week. And therefore I shall depend upon you to do every thing on the other side of the water to prevent this mortification from coming upon her that is, and ever will be, most sincerely, &c." *

This pathetic appeal to his feelings and loyalty, made a due impression; and however dissatisfied

* Printed in the Conduct, p. 164. but evidently only an extract from the original letter.

with the conduct of the sovereign, he refused to countenance so indecorous a proposal, as we find by his reply * to the duchess on the same subject.

" Since my last I have had time to read a second time your three letters of the 16th, 18th, and 22d of the last month, by which I see that I have not yet answered some things in your letters.

" In the first place, you may depend upon my joining with the whigs, in opposition to the tories, in all things; but as to the invitation, or what else may be personal to the queen, in regard to myself, as well as concern for her, I must never do any thing that looks like flying in her face. But as to every thing else, I shall always be ready to join with the whigs, in opposition to the tories, for whom I shall have no reserve. I am entirely of your opinion as to 37 and 222, that they may be had by those that shall think it worth their while to buy them. The first has already told me that he will do whatever I shall think fit for the service; but as I must be master of my own actions, which may concern the queen personally, so on the other hand, I shall solicit nobody to be of my opinion, but be contented in giving my reasons and vote in the house. You judge very right of the queen, that nothing will go so near her heart as that of the invitation. I think the project very dangerous: I wish the whigs would think well of it, but I am at too great a distance to be advising.

" The business of Mr. Walpole has very much

* Without date, but certainly written early in July.

vexed me, for by what he writes me, my brother George has been much to blame. I wish, with all my heart, he would retire, for I have been long convinced it would be for his service and every body else. But as I am told the prince will not hear it, I shall never desist from being for it.

" I would by no means endeavour to change any opinion that lord Sunderland may have, but I think there is no necessity of his saying any thing to the queen, that she will take ill; but, on the contrary, that he would endeavour to please, as much as is consistent with his opinion; for it will be very mortifying to me, upon many accounts, if she should persist to have him removed, so that I beg of him, upon my account, that he would do all that is in his power.

" Having wrote thus far, I have received your dear kind letter of the 6th, and as my happiness depends upon your kindness, be assured as long as I have life, I shall do all I can to deserve your esteem and love. I enclose to you Mrs. Morley's letter, and the copy of my answer. You will let Mr. Montgomery see them both, but nobody else must know that I send them. We continue under the great difficulty of getting cannon. Till we have them, we must be contented with sending parties into France, which makes them very uneasy."

We continue the series of this melancholy, but interesting correspondence, for a short time after Marlborough quitted the camp of Werwick, that we may present a more distinct and connected portion of the history of this political intrigue.

It is necessary, however, to observe that at this period the whigs again endeavoured to stimulate the zeal of the two ministers, by recurring to threats of hostility. Their determination was announced by Sunderland, in a vehement letter to the duke, and afterwards by repeated messages through the duchess, who warmly seconded their representations, as we find by the reply of the duke.

To the Duchess.

"*Helchin, Aug.* 16. — Yours of the 27th came so late that I could not, for want of time, do any more than thank you for it by the last post. You say that lord Sunderland has assured you that I may depend upon the friendship of the whigs, if I will make it possible. You and lord Sunderland may be assured that I have no intentions or thoughts but that of deserving well from England, and consequently must and will depend on the friendship of the whigs; and if my good intentions are not seconded with success, I think I shall have nothing justly to reproach myself withal, so that I may retire with quietness and honour.

"The siege of Lisle, which was begun on Monday last, is of that consequence to France, that I nowise doubt of their drawing all the troops that is in their power together, to give us what disturbance they can. I pray God to bless this undertaking, and all others that may tend to the bringing of us to a safe and lasting peace, and then I will not put the visit of lord Haversham to Abigail much to heart. But as that angry lord has not for some years made any visit to any

belonging to the court, I think his visit to Abigail will not be much for her service, nor that of the queen, since it must appear to all the world, that she is the protectress of those who would destroy the queen's ministers, which must occasion very great prejudice to her service.

" But I think we are now acting for the liberties of all Europe, so that till this matter is a little more over, tho' I love the queen with all my heart, I can't think of the business of England, till this great affair is decided, which I think must be by another battle; for I am resolved to risk rather than suffer Brussels to be taken, tho' the number of this army is very much diminished by the siege. But I rely on the justness of our cause, and that God will not forsake us, and that he will continue to keep our troops in good heart, as they are at present. I beg you to be so kind and just as to be assured, that my kindness for you is such, that my greatest ambition is bounded in that of ending my days quietly with you."

The embarrassment which Marlborough encountered from the difficulty of proving his sincerity to the whigs, and combating the pertinacity of the queen, induced him to imitate the example of the treasurer, in offering his resignation. We do not find his letter to the queen on this occasion; but one, in which he announced his resolution to the duchess, we lay before the reader.

" *Aug.* 20. — *I send you back yours to Mrs. Morley, as also that of Mr. Montgomery to her, as you desired, having marked the lines which I*

*desire her to reflect on.** I am doing my best to serve England and the queen, and, with all my heart and soul, I pray for God's protection and blessing; but I am so tired of what I hear, and what I think must happen in England, that I am every day confirmed, that I should be wanting to myself, and ungrateful to God Almighty, if I did not take the first occasion that can be practicable, to retire from business. And as I have for several years served my queen and country with all my heart, so I should be glad to have some time to recollect and be grateful for the many mercies I have received from the hand of God. I would not live like a monk, but I can't with patience think of continuing much longer in business, having it not in my power to persuade that to be done, which I think is right. I foresee the difficulty of retiring during the war, which is my greatest trouble at this time; but even that difficulty must be overcome, if I must be in some manner answerable for the notions of the queen, who is no ways governed by any thing I can say or do. God knows who it is that influences; but as I love her and my country, I dread the consequences.

" You say nothing of going to Blenheim, but the weather is so fine I could wish you there, by which the finishing within doors, I believe, would go on the faster. If it were possible, I would flatter myself that I might be so happy to see it the next summer, especially if M. de Vendome keeps his word in endeavouring the relief of Lisle,

* These lines in italics were erased by the duchess, when she communicated the letter to the queen.

where the trenches are to be opened this night; and if they let us be at rest for a fortnight longer, they will very much oblige us."

"*August* 23. — You say Mrs. Morley has taken no notice of your letter. I think that is a true sign she is angry. There being three or four posts come from England since she has received Mr. Freeman's last letter, I take it for granted the same method will be taken of giving no answer. I am no ways dissatisfied at that manner of proceeding, for till the queen changes her humour and resolutions, the less the conversations are the better. What Mr. Craggs has told you of the meetings and resolutions of the tories, and that they think they have good ground to stand on, is very natural to people that have always flattered themselves. I both hope and think they can succeed in nothing, that can be of great consequence to the government; but they will always have it in their power to vex those that are in business. For my own part, I shall be in no ways surprised, when I see them act with all the malice imaginable against me. I shall ask no favour of them, being fully resolved of retiring, as soon as possible, to such a sort of life, that it shall not be in their power to vex me. I shall always endeavour to oehave myself so, as that such of my friends as will be inclined to be kind to me, shall have no reason to be ashamed of it.

"I am very sorry that the inclinations of my brother are so violent for the tories, as that they depend upon his interest with the prince; but all that would quickly signify very little, if it were

not for the great power Mrs. Masham has with the queen. I am so fully convinced of this, that I should never trouble the queen with any of my letters, but that I can't refuse lord treasurer and you, when you desire any thing of me. I am sure that the interest of Mrs. Masham is so settled with the queen, that we only trouble ourselves to no purpose; and by endeavouring to hurt, we do good offices to her; so that in my opinion we ought to be careful of our own actions, and not lay every thing to heart, but submit to whatever may happen.

"I do not take Mr. Bromley for a great negotiator, but a less able man than himself will reconcile lord Rochester and Mr. Harley at this time. I believe you may depend upon it that they will be all of one mind, and that they think themselves assured of the hearts of the prince and the queen, which is a very dismal prospect.

"If I had not made use of the leisure time I had yesterday, you had not been troubled with so long a letter, I having been on horseback all this day. The trenches were opened last night before Lisle, so that we shall very quickly see what method M. de Vendome will take for the saving of that place."

The Queen to the Duke of Marlborough.

[In reply to his offer of resignation.]*

"I am sorry to find you in such a splenetic way as to talk of retiring, it being a thing I can never consent to, and what your country, nor your truly

* Without date, but endorsed by the duchess, August 27. 1708.—From a copy in the hand of the duchess.

faithful friends can never think right, whatever melancholy thoughts they may have all this time. Besides, in my poor opinion, when after all the glorious successes God Almighty has blessed you with, he is pleased to make you the happy instrument of giving a lasting peace to Europe, you are bound in conscience, both to God and man, to lend your helping hand; and how can you do that, if you retire from business? You may be as grateful to God Almighty in a public station as in a private one; but I do not wonder at your desiring quiet, after all the fatigues and vexations you go through daily; for it is certainly the most valuable blessing in this world, and what every one would choose, I believe, that has ever had any thing to do in business, if there were nothing to be considered but one's self.

" Lord treasurer talks of retiring too, and told me, not many days ago, he would do all he could to serve me, by advising with people, and settling a scheme for the carrying on my business in the parliament, before he went to Newmarket; but that he would not come back from thence. I told him, that must not be, that he could not answer it either to God or himself; and I hope you will both consider better of it, and not do an action, that will bring me and your country into confusion. Is there no consideration to be had for either? You may flatter yourselves that people will approve of your quitting; but if you should persist in these cruel and unjust resolutions, believe me, where one will say you are in the right, hundreds will blame you. Lord treasurer has gone to make

a visit to 42*, where the town says he will meet with four or five gentlemen †, who I can never be satisfied mean well to my service, till they behave themselves better than they did in the last parliament, and have done ever since the rising of it; for from that minute they have been disputing my authority, and are certainly designing, when the new one meets, to tear that little prerogative the crown has to pieces. And now, because my servants and I set up one they formerly liked to be speaker ‡, they are against him; for no reason, I suppose, but because they will have none in any employment that does not entirely depend upon them. Now, how is it possible, when one knows and sees all these things, as plainly as the sun at noon-day, ever to take these people into my bosom? For God's sake, do but make it your own case, and consider then what you would do, and why a handful of men must awe their fellow-subjects. There is nobody more desirous than I to encourage those whig friends that behave themselves well; but I do not care to have any thing to do with those that have shewn themselves to be of so tyrannising a temper; and not to run on farther on those subjects, to be short, I think things are come to, whether I shall submit to the five tyrannising lords, or they to me. This is my poor opinion on the disputes at present, which

* From a letter written by Mr. Maynwaring to the duchess, alluding to this visit, it appears that the cypher 42 means Dr. John Moore, bishop of Ely. The meeting was purely for whig purposes, as we find from Mr. Maynwaring, that the duke of Somerset was displeased because he was not of the party.

† The whig junta.

‡ Sir Thomas Hanmer.

could not be, if people would weigh and state the case just as it is, without partiality on one side or the other, which I beg, for the friendship you have ever professed for me, you would do; and let me know your thoughts of what may be the best expedient, to keep me from being thrown into the hands of the five lords."

The answer of the duke to this pathetic and pressing appeal is not extant, but a draught in the hand-writing of lord Godolphin, which was sent for his use and approbation, will enable us to judge of the contents.

" As to the reflections your majesty is pleased to make upon my *real* inclinations to retire, tho' it be very natural and very desirable, after one has lived a great many years in a hurry, to enjoy some quiet in one's old age; yet I will own freely to your majesty, my inclinations to retire, proceed chiefly from finding myself incapable of being of any farther use to your majesty. The long and faithful services I have endeavoured to perform to your majesty, and the goodness you had expressed to me upon several occasions, had created a general opinion, both abroad and at home, that your majesty placed entire trust and confidence in me; and upon that foot I was the more capable of doing many great and effectual services, both here abroad, and in England. But your majesty will give me leave to say, with all imaginable duty, that is now reduced singly to serving you at the head of the army this campaign; for your majesty having shewn so publicly, last winter and this spring, that you have no more trust and confidence in me, nor

any reliance upon my opinion, but much more upon the opinion of those, who have neither honesty nor capacity to serve you, and who visibly ruined your service last winter, in several undeniable instances, it is no longer possible for me to be of any further use to you; and to continue in your council to advise, without credit enough to prevail with you to follow good advice, would only expose myself and my reputation in the world, by making myself answerable for other people's follies, or worse.

" And by what your majesty is pleased to say in your letter of the lord treasurer, tho' I have nothing so far as that from himself, I believe his opinion, and his reasons for that opinion, must be the same with mine. Your majesty is pleased to think we shall be blamed for quitting; but, not to reflect upon that coldness, and that behaviour in yourself, which forces us to quit, by withdrawing your trust and confidence from us, to give it to insinuating, busy flatterers, who can't serve you one month this winter, without danger of being torn in pieces in the streets. I don't doubt but these things are very sensible to the lord treasurer, as I am sure they are to me. However, I shall not trouble your majesty any farther with the consequences that must follow, since I find plainly by your majesty's letter, that all I have said and written hitherto, is to no purpose, nor, indeed, ever can be, while your majesty's heart is possessed by all the false and malicious insinuations, which are possible to be suggested by our enemies; and therefore, I shall conclude this head, with wishing your majesty may find abler servants than we have

been; more faithful and affectionate, I will beg leave to say you never can. *

" As † to the tyranny of the five lords, which you seem so much to apprehend, and so much to desire that you might be kept out of their hands, if your majesty were disposed to hearken to the advice of those who have supported you for almost seven years upon the throne, and much more before you came to it, you would be in no danger of falling into any hands but ours, whom you did not, till very lately, use to think dangerous; and certainly we are not altered. By a maxim I have often heard, that " interest cannot lie," we can have no other interest but your majesty's, and to make your throne powerful, and your government strong. But your majesty will allow some people may have an interest to our prejudice, they may have an interest to create difficulties every day in your majesty's mind against us, and by that means to force us out of your service, and then, indeed, I am afraid you may be in very dangerous hands. But as to these five lords, if your majesty will be inclined to do such things only, as in themselves are not only just and reasonable, with regard to all that is past, but useful and necessary, for all that is to come, your majesty needs not to apprehend falling into any hands but ours, who have done you very many faithful services, and who, whatever return we are like to have for them, will

* This draught was transmitted to the duchess, to be forwarded to the duke, and we find two or three trifling alterations in her hand.

† On a separate paper in the hand of Godolphin, but evidently a continuation.

never fail to pray for your majesty's long life and prosperity."

"I have written this in a good deal of haste and disorder, and therefore I believe it wants no little correction; but you may omit or alter any part of it just as you please."

We cannot quit this subject, without again adverting to the interminable disputes between the queen and the duchess, which acquired new force at this particular period, and may be traced to the same source.

Soon after the victory of Oudenard their altercations produced an open quarrel. The duchess, as mistress of the robes, had arranged the jewels to be worn by the queen, at the solemn Te Deum celebrated on that occasion. The queen refusing to adopt the arrangement, the duchess ascribed her objection to the ill offices of Mrs. Masham, and reproached her, by letter, for such a proof of unkindness and contempt. She also taunted her royal mistress in the coach, as they passed to the church, and during the service itself, reverting to the subject, she coupled her indiscreet remonstrance with a complaint, in the name of the duke, that he no longer enjoyed the usual degree of confidence and favour. As the queen prepared to reply, the duchess interrupted her, by abruptly requesting, that she would cease the conversation, lest they should be overheard.

Soon after the ceremony, she sent the queen the letter from the duke, dated July 23, accompanied with an epistle, in a more aggravated style of invective than she had hitherto ventured to

employ. The displeasure which so uncourtly and acrimonious an effusion excited, was marked by the tone of the queen's reply.

"*After the commands you gave me in the church*, on the thanksgiving, of not answering you, I should not have troubled you with these lines, but to return the duke of Marlborough's letter safe into your hands."

The sarcastic and contemptuous brevity of this note, drew forth a reproachful answer from the duchess, in which, among other equally unbecoming expressions, she observed; —

"I should think myself wanting in my duty to you, if I saw you so much in the wrong, as, without prejudice or passion, I think you are, in several particulars, and did not tell you of it." She then comments on the word *commands*, and concludes, with affected humility: "Though I have always writ to you as a friend, and lived with you as such, for so many years, with all the truth and honesty and zeal for your service that was possible, yet I shall never forget that I am your subject, nor cease to be a faithful one."

This epistolary wrangle was not long afterwards followed by an interview, in which the duchess set the seal to her indiscretion, by renewing her expostulations on the countenance manifested towards Mr. Harley and Mrs. Masham. The minute of this conversation, of which no trace appears in the Conduct, is preserved in her hand-writing, and was evidently suppressed, on mature reflection. We give this characteristic document, without abridgment or alteration.

[Heads of the conversation with Mrs. Morley, Sept. 9.–20. 1708.]

"Nobody trusted or countenanced by her, but who is in some way or other influenced by Mr. Harley.

"Mr. Harley never had a good reputation in the world, but is much worse thought of, since he is out of her service, where people were content to suffer him, because he was thought to depend upon lord Marlborough and lord treasurer. But since he was tempted by the favour of Abigail to set up for himself, and to betray and ruin those that had brought him into her service, and her service itself also, nobody alive can be more odious than he is, or more contemptible to all parties.

"Why will she not consider fairly and coolly the distinction she makes between some of the whigs, who did her such real and acceptable service, in the union with Scotland, and in the matter of the invitation, and my lord Haversham, who, upon both these actions, and many others, talked so insolently and scandalously of her administration, in her own hearing. And yet that man was admitted to her presence with the air of a friend, though he is plainly in another interest, and can never serve her; and the others are kept at the greatest distance, contrary to the advice and opinion of all her servants, whom she has most reason to trust, though they have shewn themselves, in her presence also, both able and willing to serve her, and desirous to make her great and happy.

"Even in this last session of parliament, the tories joined to a man against the council of Scotland, and Mr. Harley himself underhand; when

after all that was over, upon occasion of the late invasion, these men did expose the tories to all the world, by shewing their zeal for her and her government, by strengthening it every way in their power, at that time of danger."

In the course of this interview the altercation became so violent, that the high-toned voice of the duchess was heard in the anti-chamber; and when she came out, her eyes were suffused with tears. The queen was found in a similar state of agitation, by those who first entered the apartment; and we learn from a subsequent letter of the duchess, that she was dismissed with every proof of contempt and indignation.

These fatal contentions could not long be kept a secret from the royal attendants; and the reports, which were industriously circulated on the occasion, produced the usual effect attending the decline of court favour. An instance of this kind occurred in the conduct of the earl of Kent, who being blamed by Mr. Maynwaring, for his assiduities towards Mrs. Masham, faintly excused himself, on the plea that he must behave civilly to all the queen's servants. Some of the whigs also began to anticipate the disgrace of their zealous patroness, and treated her with such coldness and reserve, as to excite her suspicion, that they were transferring their devotions to the new idol. *

The mortifying result of this altercation, and the no less mortifying consequences which it produced, appear to have cooled the zeal of the

* Letter from Mr. Maynwaring to the duchess, without date, but evidently written at this period.

duchess. In a fit of spleen and disappointment she testified to the duke her contempt of all party distinctions, and at the same time announced a decided resolution to discontinue her fruitless and unwelcome remonstrances. Her determination was not only applauded by her husband, who had so often lamented her warmth and imprudence, but even by the whig chiefs, who perceived that her importunities injured, instead of promoting their cause.

To the Duchess.

" *Sept.* 27.—Having received yours of the 10th this afternoon, I could not omit sending back all the inclosed papers you have desired, and letting you know, at the same time, what I have formerly writ in other letters, that I am glad you have taken the resolution of being quiet; for you are certainly in the right, that whatever is said or writ by you, the lord treasurer, and me, serves only for information to do hurt. The copy of the letter you have sent, I think, should be delivered; for if it does no good, it can do no hurt. For my own part, I am quite weary of all business; and if amongst all these disagreeable bustles, I could be so happy as to have liberty of remaining quiet with you, I should be at the height of my wishes."

" *Oct.* 1.—By the french having taken all the posts along the Scheld, makes it almost impossible for our letters to go that way without falling into their hands; and that by Ostend is very near as dangerous, so that we are obliged to be upon our guard of what we write, if we would not have them know it; so that you must not expect particulars as to news. But as for my personal

esteem and kindness for you, I should rather the world should know it than otherwise; for if I am to be happy, it must be with you. I have read yours of the 10–21st three times, and am so entirely of your opinion as to the queen, that I cannot hinder repeating it again in this letter; for the resolution you have taken of neither speaking nor writing, is so certainly right, that I dare assure you, that you will find a good effect of it in one month. For I really am of opinion, that when the queen shall be sensible, which she will be in that time, that you, the lord treasurer, and I, are in such despair, that we offer nothing, but leave every thing to the direction of those that have the present power with her, it will so startle her, that she will take other measures; and this will make her comply with what is necessary for the saving herself, or nothing will do. I can't entirely agree with your opinion of the queen; I must own I have a tenderness for her, and I would willingly believe that all which is amiss, proceeds from the ambition and ill judgment of Mrs. Masham, and the knavery and artfulness of Mr. Harley."

"*Oct.* 4. — Since my last, I have had the pleasure of yours of the 14th. Notwithstanding the difficulty of the passage of the letters, I did in my last explain my thoughts so fully, as to the queen, that you must not think my opinion changed, if I should not mention her any more this campaign. I do from my soul pity the lord treasurer; for his good sense must make him sensible how we are both exposed by the folly and opiniatrety of others."

CHAPTER 72.

1708.

Resolution adopted by the allied commanders to besiege Lille. — Situation and defences of the place. — Preparations for the siege. — Successful march of the convoy of artillery, stores, and ammunition, from Brussels to the allied camp. — Movement of Marlborough to Helchin. — Investment of Lille by Eugene. — Dispositions for the attack. — Opening of the trenches. — Progress of the besiegers. — Junction of Vendome with Berwick, and march of their combined force round the sources of the Dyle, to raise the siege. — Camp of Marlborough at Fretin. — Preparations to repel the enemy. — Indecision of the french commanders. — They retire beyond the Scheld. — Transactions of the siege. — Eugene wounded in the attack of the counterscarp. — Marlborough superintends the operations, both of the besieging and covering armies. — Complains of the mismanagement of the engineers. — Receives from king Charles the offer of the government of the Netherlands for life.

After long and mature deliberation, the confederate generals finally resolved to undertake the siege of Lille, an enterprise which, though less bold and decisive than an immediate invasion of France, was yet the only operation in which the views, means, and interests of all parties could be brought to coincide. The difficulties with which it was likely to be attended, were, however, so great and multifarious, that it was made the sub-

ject of general ridicule in France; and Vendome publicly declared his conviction, that an able commander, like Eugene, would never venture to engage in so rash a design.

Lille, the capital of French Flanders, was one of the first conquests of Louis the fourteenth in 1667, and ceded to him by the treaty of Aix la Chapelle. It is situated in a swampy plain, watered by several streams. The fortifications were constructed under the superintendance of the celebrated Vauban, who strengthened it with a regular citadel, in the form of a pentagon, defended with two ditches, and a double series of outworks. It was the key of the country watered by the Lys and the Scheld, and connected with both rivers by canals. A project for its defence was drawn up by Vauban himself, which, on his death, in the preceding year, was consigned to his pupil and nephew. This able officer, as chief engineer, hastened to the place, as soon as it was threatened. The command was entrusted to marshal Boufflers, governor of Flanders, who was distinguished for his skill in the defence of fortresses, and assisted by officers of his own choice, the most intelligent and skilful in their several departments.

The troops who had escaped in the rout at Oudenard were formed into four battalions, and the garrison was reinforced by two others; the whole, with three regiments of dragoons, and 800 invalids, making a total of nearly 15,000 men; and to use the words of the french biographer, "never were preparations better concerted, nor more proper to frustrate the efforts of the enemy." Nor

did the strength of the place create the only difficulty. The season was already advanced, the necessary circumvallation was extensive, and the hostile army was not only superior to that which was to cover the siege, but commanded all the water communications with the nearest part of Holland.

On entering Lille the 29th of July, Boufflers prepared the usual means for a vigorous resistance. New works were constructed on the weakest points, the hedges and trees were cut down, to the distance of 800 paces, and fascines, and pallisades in abundance, were furnished by the district. Several mines were also formed under the covert way, in parts which appeared the most threatened; and every arrangement was made for maintaining a constant supply of arms and artillery, for the subsistence of the garrison, and for the regular distribution of the ammunition and stores.

This memorable enterprise excited universal attention, and drew to the spot many distinguished personages. King Augustus arrived on the 19th of July in the confederate camp, together with the landgrave of Hesse. Marlborough reviewed before them the two lines of his army, and afterwards the king repaired to the quarters of Eugene. It is not uninteresting to observe, that he was here joined by his natural son, Maurice, aged twelve years, afterwards so celebrated as Marshal Saxe, who had secretly departed from Dresden on foot, and reached the army, notwithstanding the fatigues of the journey, and the vigilance of his guardians. Here also Munich and Schwerin, who both rose to

such a height of military fame, made their first essay in a species of warfare, of all others, the most dangerous and critical. Lastly, here the young prince of Hanover added to the laurels, which he had gained at Oudenard, and contributed to increase the fame of that nation over whom he was destined to reign.

For want of water conveyance, the train and stores for the siege, amounting to 94 pieces of cannon, 60 mortars, and above 3000 ammunition waggons, had been collected at Brussels. The whole attention of the two contending armies was therefore employed, one to secure, the other to prevent the march of this important convoy, which occupied a line of fifteen miles, and had to traverse a tract of twenty-five leagues, through a hostile force amounting to 100,000 men.

Eager to profit by so favourable an opportunity of striking a decisive blow, the french commanders detached a corps of 18,000 men, from the main army at Ghent, to Melle, with the view of annoying the convoy at its departure from Brussels. At the same time Berwick advanced to Mortagne, with a design of arresting it, in the passage across the Scheld, towards the allied camp. On their part, the confederate generals were not less vigilant, in watching over the safety of a convoy, on which their future success depended. Eugene visited the camp of Werwick at the latter end of July, to concert the necessary preparations with his colleague, and on the 3d of August departed with a reinforcement of 25 battalions and as many squadrons, to rejoin his army, which had hitherto re-

mained in the vicinity of Brussels. As the convoy approached the point of destination, active measures were adopted by Marlborough to strengthen the escort, and facilitate the movements of Eugene.

On the 6th of August the convoy departed from Brussels under the immediate care of the prince of Hesse, while Eugene commanded the covering army. It took the route to Soignies, which it reached on the same evening. The hostile detachment instantly moved from Melle towards Ninove, but finding the convoy too strongly protected, withdrew to its first position. Berwick, on the other hand, considered Mons as threatened, and weakened his force, by throwing succours into the place. Contrary, however, to their expectation, the convoy on the 8th directed its course from Soignies to Ath, where it halted the ensuing day. Thence it proceeded to Trasne in the way to the Scheld, which it was to traverse over bridges prepared at Pottes.

Meanwhile a constant communication had been maintained between the two allied commanders respecting its progress. Receiving intelligence on the 7th that it was preparing to move, Marlborough detached the duke of Wirtemberg, with 30 squadrons, to advance to Oudenard, and place himself under the orders of Eugene. On the 11th, being apprised that it had passed the Scheld at Pottes, the preceding day, he sent general Wood, with 30 squadrons, to guard against the enterprises of the troops at Ghent; and the prince of Orange, with 31 battalions, to Marquette, on the Lower Dyle,

to hold in check the garrison of Lille. On the following day he moved with the main army, and advanced to the vicinity of Helchin.

The convoy being now in safety, Marlborough had the gratification to meet Eugene, whose army had reached Templeuve, and to share in his exultation at the success of so arduous an undertaking. So perfect, indeed, were the arrangements, so indefatigable the exertions, and so consummate the vigilance of the two illustrious chiefs, that this immense train of stores accomplished its march, not only without losing a single carriage, but even without suffering a single insult. So consummate an enterprise extorted the wonder and admiration even of an enemy. The caustic Feuquières bears an involuntary testimony of applause, when he observes, "Posterity will scarcely believe this fact, though it is an indubitable truth." Nor can the french biographer refrain from exclaiming, "Never was a daring enterprise conducted with more skill or greater circumspection."

The arrangements were now completed for the investment of Lille. The prince of Orange, who had reached the Marquette on the 11th, had surprised a french post in the abbey, by the enterprising valour of a british serjeant, who swam across the river and let down the draw-bridge. He thus straitened Lille between the Upper and Lower Dyle. On the 13th, Eugene led his army across the Marque at Pont à Tressin, and prolonged the investment to the Upper Dyle. On the same day detachments of 1500 horse and 1200 foot were ordered to Templeuve and Pont à Chin to watch

the movements of the enemy from Tournay, while the investing troops were taking post. On the 14th the camp for the south and east attack was traced. The quarters began near Haubordin on the Upper Dyle, passed by Lambessart to the abbey of Marquette, and then bending in a curve towards the Marque, continued through Flers to the point where they commenced.

While Eugene thus straitened the place, Marlborough continued at Helchin, where he covered the operation, and protected the convoys from Ath, Brussels, and Oudenard. He at the same time retarded the immediate junction of the armies of Vendome and Berwick, the first of which remained in the vicinity of Ghent, and the second near Mons. A large body of artificers and pioneers were employed on the lines of circumvallation, which were to be fifteen feet wide and nine deep, and to embrace a circumference of nine miles. The camp of artillery was placed with the right at Pont à Marquette, and amounted to 120 pieces of heavy cannon, 40 large mortars, 20 howitzers, and 400 ammunition waggons.

On this event Marlborough thus writes to Godolphin:—

"*August* 9.—I am obliged to you for the good counsel you give me, not to lay at heart the unreasonable behaviour of some of my countrymen. I think what you say is reasonable, but as I act to the best of my understanding, with zeal for the queen and my country, I cannot hinder being vexed at such usage.

"Our cannon is come safe to Ath, so that we

now think it out of danger. The next thing we have to apprehend is, the intelligences they may have in our great towns, and particularly that of Brussels; for it is most certain the people are against us, so that we have been obliged to leave eight battalions and six squadrons for the security of the town. I shall be in pain till I hear that Erle is gone to the coast of Normandy."

On the 18th of August each battalion was ordered to furnish fascines and gabions, and on the 19th the engineers examined the ground, bordering the road from Lille to Werwick, to ascertain the places proper for batteries. Regulations were also published for the conduct of the attacks, which are justly considered as a model of judgment, skill, and precision.* Of the 50 battalions employed in the siege, 10 were to be always in the trenches, and to be relieved in succession.

Before the line of circumvallation was fully completed, Eugene opened the trenches, on the night of the 22d, and the corps employed in the service consisted of three battalions of imperialists, four of palatines, and nine of hessians, supported by nine squadrons, under the orders of general Wilks, and 4000 workmen. Attacks were traced on each side of the Lower Dyle, one on the right, against the gate of St. Andrew, directed by Des Roques; the other on the left, by M. du Mey, against the works between the Dyle and the gate of St. Madelaine. This operation was not performed without considerable loss, as the troops

* Printed in Brodrick, v. ii. p. 26.

were charged by Boufflers, with all the cavalry of the garrison. The following morning, the army of Marlborough passed the Scheld in two columns near Pottes, and took post with the right at Escanaffe, and the left at Ainieres, his head quarters being placed at Amougies, and those of Overkirk at Vaudripont. He thus facilitated the foraging parties, and retarded the junction which Berwick was preparing to effect with the main army, under the dukes of Burgundy and Vendome.

During these operations, we find several letters addressed to Godolphin.

" *Helchin, August* 13. — You will know by this post, that our cannon is arrived safely at Menin, and that I have reinforced prince Eugene's army with 31 battalions and 34 squadrons. That, with the detachments we have made for Flanders and Brussels, makes this army to consist only of 140 squadrons and 69 battalions, with which I am to observe the motions of the duke of Burgundy's army. That of prince Eugene is for the siege, and observation of the duke of Berwick. Prince Eugene's army consists of 90 squadrons and 53 battalions, by which you will see, that when we join, which I believe we shall do, the whole will be 230 squadrons and 122 battalions. This day Lille is invested; I pray God to bless the undertaking. What I most fear is, the want of powder and ball for so great an undertaking, for our engineers fear we must take the town, before we can attack the citadel."

" *Helchin, Aug.* 20. — By the threatening of M. de Vendome, I did not think we should have

continued thus long in this camp; but as yet he is not marched from behind the canal. But the duke of Berwick is drawing to his army, with all the troops he can, from their several towns. M. de Vendome declares in his army, that he has *carte blanche*, and that he will attempt the relief of Lille; that when the duke of Berwick joins him, they shall then have 135 battalions and 260 squadrons, which he flatters himself will be much stronger than we can be. If we have a second action, and God blesses our just cause, this, in all likelihood, will be the last campaign; for I think they would not venture a battle, but that they are resolved to submit to any condition, if the success be on our side; and if they should get the better, they will think themselves masters, so that if there should be an action, it is likely to be the last this war. If God continues on our side, we have nothing to fear, our troops being good, though not so numerous as theirs. I dare say, before half the troops have fought, the success will declare, I hope in God, on our side, and then I may have, what I earnestly wish for, quiet; and you may be much more at ease, than when you writ yours of the 31st of the last month, which I received yesterday.

"I find by Mr. Erle's letter, that mine was very welcome, since it gives them ease, as to their not landing at St. Valory. I wish they may be able to do any thing on the coast of Normandy. I do think their resolutions at the councils of war give no great encouragement, but they cannot avoid giving great alarms.

"Lord Haversham's visit makes a great noise.

I should be glad to know the occasion of lord Peterborough and he being friends; no doubt it was concerted. If God puts it into the heart of the queen to do what is right, the projects of these gentlemen will signify very little. The pensioner did acquaint me with what M. Buys had said to him concerning peace, which, in effect, was nothing more, but to inform himself if his friends were willing to make any offers; and that accordingly he should receive instruction from the king of France; but I believe neither he nor any body else will have any orders, till they see the fate of Lille, and consequently the issue of this campaign. When I writ you that I must drive the french from Ghent and Bruges, I had no other thought than that it was absolutely necessary for the common cause. It certainly may occasion my coming ten days later, but if we are blessed with success in this part of the country, they will have less heart for the defence of these towns, and then I may come home early."

"*Amougies, Aug.* 23. — By yours of the 3d, I find you were going to be happy for some days in Wiltshire. If you have had the same weather we have had, you could not avoid being abroad the whole day. The trenches being opened last night, and the duke of Berwick having drawn all the troops of this part of the country to his army at Mortagne, I marched this morning to hinder his joining with the duke of Burgundy, between the Scheld and the Dender, at Lessines, which I was assured was their design, which now will be very hard for him to do. We expect the duke of Bur-

gundy will march to-morrow. His first march will let us see if he has any design on any part of Brabant, or if his intentions are, what they write from Paris, of relieving Lille by a battle. As soon as I see what time the siege of Lille is like to take us up, I shall then let you know my thoughts as to the employing the troops with lieut.-general Erle. In the mean time, they will have a month or six weeks, to do what mischief they can on the coast of France. I thank you for your good news of the galleons. * If it has the consequence you mention, it will help to make us easy. The first thing we shall see, will be, the effect it will have on their credit. I am afraid they have found new methods of drawing money from Holland."

At this period the trenches were as rapidly pushed as the nature of the ground permitted. A sortie of the enemy was repulsed on the 23d, and during the night the first parallel was extended, and two batteries were ready to fire at day-break. A bloody struggle ensued for the possession of a chapel and wind-mill; but during the 24th and 25th, a second parallel, with the trenches of communication, was begun. Three batteries of cannon, mortars, and howitzers, were now opened from this parallel, which fired with a tremendous effect on the nearest defences, and were answered with equal spirit by the garrison.

On the night of the 26th a new contest ensued for the possession of the chapel, which was carried

* The capture and destruction of seventeen spanish galleons, richly laden, off Carthagena, by admiral Wager, which took place in the course of the Spring.

and rased by the french. The second parallel being extended toward the river, on the 27th, at eight in the morning, the principal batteries were opened against the works of the place, Eugene himself firing the first shot at one attack, and the prince of Orange at the other. The progress of the besiegers awakened the apprehensions of Vendome, and he began to dread, lest an enterprise which he had treated with ridicule, should be accomplished in the face of his superior army. He therefore concerted with Berwick the means of effecting a junction; but his movements did not escape the vigilance of his antagonist.

To Lord Godolphin.

" *August 27.* * * * * I am in expectation of hearing every minute that the army of M. de Vendome and that of the duke of Berwick are on their march to join, so that I begin to write early this morning, fearing I may not have time in the afternoon. Our cannon before Lille began this morning to fire, so whatever M. de Vendome intends for the relief of that town, he must not lose much time, since our engineers promise that we shall have the town in ten days, after which we must attack the citadel. But when we are once masters of the town, we shall have no occasion for so great a circumvallation, by which the army will be much stronger; so that if the enemy will venture, it must be before we take the town. Our troops are in good heart, and their foot in a bad condition. They are, in horse, stronger than we, but upon the whole, I cannot think they will venture a battle, though it is said they have positive orders

to succour the place. They write from the Hague, what I hope is not true, that a french detachment is marching from the Rhine to this country; for my only hope on that side was, that the elector of Hanover would act so as to hinder any detachment being sent hither. But it is so far from that, that the same news says they have also sent another for Dauphiné. They pretend these detachments should have begun their march on the 17th. Our next letters will inform us of the truth.

" I have this minute advice that M. de Vendome has begun his march, but as his army was very much separated, he would take up his camp this night, his right half a league from Gavre, and his left towards Ninove; so that his army will not be above one league and a half from Ghent, which has made me resolve not to march till to-morrow, that I know positively which way he takes for his second march; for as I am now posted, it is impossible for him to get between me and the siege; and I have taken such measures with prince Eugene, for the strengthening each other, that I no ways doubt of preventing any thing they may flatter themselves with. And if they will attempt the relief of Lille, they must pass by Mons, which will cost them eight days, and I shall have it in my power to join prince Eugene, in less than three days, with ease. I will keep the post till to-morrow, that I may give you an account of their further motions.

" By the slow motions M. de Vendome makes with his army, it looks as if his intentions were, to make the duke of Berwick march round by Bra-

bant to join him; for, as I am posted, he can do it no other way, so that as to point of time, it is equal to us whether the duke of Vendome marches by Mons, or obliges the duke of Berwick to make he tour of Brabant. One day will inform us of his resolutions."

The junction took place, as Marlborough had foreseen. The dukes of Burgundy and Vendome, leaving the count de la Motte with a flying camp of 20,000 men to protect Ghent and Bruges, directed their march by Melle to Ninove, where they passed the Scheld, while Berwick moved on the 28th of August from Mons through Herine. On the 30th, they joined in the plain between Gramont and Lessines. Their force now amounted to 140 battalions and 250 squadrons, exceeding 110,000 men. The next morning they encamped near Leuse, passed the Scheld near Tournay, and on the 2d of September entering the plain, stretched between Blanden and Willemeau.

The confederate generals were not inattentive to these movements. Marlborough re-passing the Scheld on the 30th of August at Pottes and Escanaffe, encamped between Ponte d'Espières and Avelghem. The next day he advanced to Templeuve and Willemeau, and on the 3d of September took post behind the Marque, his right at Antreulle, his left at Anstange, and his centre at Peronne. In the evening he held a conference with his colleague. The next day Eugene repaired to the army, and the two generals rode out to examine the ground where the enemy were expected to arrive, near Phalempin. Naturally

judging that the french commanders would turn round the source of the Marque to pass through the interval between that river and the Dyle, they decided that on the slightest movement of the enemy, the right of the army of observation should be extended to the Dyle, and supported on Noyelles, and the left brought to Peronne, in order to receive the expected attack.

These arrangements were communicated to Godolphin.

" *Peronne, Sept.* 3. — When I came to this camp on Saturday, I immediately went to the siege, where I had the dissatisfaction of finding every thing backwarder than was represented to me by letter. We have this morning seized a man, who was endeavouring to get into Lille, who has confessed that he was to assure the marshal de Boufflers, from the duke of Burgundy, that he would attempt the relief. Prince Eugene dined with me yesterday, and we have marked the camp, where we are resolved to receive the enemy, if they make good their boasting. The ground is so very much for our advantage, that with the blessing of God we shall certainly beat them; so that it were to be wished they would venture, but I really think they will not. What I think they may be most troublesome in, is, in the hindering us from having provisions, for which they take all the measures they can, having defended, on pain of death, to all the french subjects, not to furnish any provisions.

" I am afraid the town and citadel will cost double the time which was first thought, by

which the honestest people are like to lose their money, in Holland as well as in England.

" Since my last I have received yours of the 6th, 8th, 12th, 13th, and 17th. I have so very little time to myself, that it will be impossible for me for some days to answer the particulars in your letters; and as for my thoughts of the troops with Mr. Erle, that will depend very much upon the time we take Lille.

" I see lord Galway presses very much for troops. It is certain, if the court of Portugal will not come into the queen's measures, whatever troops are sent, will be useless to the common cause; for they will do nothing but defend their own frontier. I desire this opinion of mine may be known to nobody but the queen and yourself."

Meanwhile the besiegers continued to advance, though slowly, and after several obstinate conflicts. Their communications were gradually pushed forward and extended, and on the 3d of September, the batteries being completed, the place was assailed with the fire of 120 pieces of cannon and 80 mortars. It is no wonder, therefore, as Marlborough expected, that Vendome should redouble his exertions to interrupt or raise the siege. After some disputes with Berwick, respecting the proposed movement, he took the route of Orchies, encamped on the 4th at Mons en Pouille, and on the 5th entered the opening between the Marque and the Dyle.

The confederates prepared to receive his attack. While the french were filing through Orchies, Marlborough took the position before chosen, and

was assisted by a strong reinforcement from the besieging army. Here he was fully protected by the natural advantages of the ground, and had reason to conclude that any attempt to disturb his operations, would involve his antagonists in new disasters.

Dangers and difficulties, however, appear not to have entered into the calculations of the enterprising Vendome, and he was only restrained from risking a sudden attack, under all disadvantages, by the opposition of his more considerate colleague, the duke of Berwick. He passed the interval, from the 5th to the 7th, in opening passages leading to the allies, and thus Marlborough was enabled to fortify his position. His intrenchments were covered by ravines, leading from Noyelles towards Entières, and terminated near Fretin, on a marsh which borders the Marque. His infantry was posted along these intrenchments, and sustained in the rear by a double line of cavalry. The front, for the space of a league, was also strengthened with a ditch, 12 feet wide and 6 deep, and artillery was planted in proper situations.

The passages being at length opened by the enemy, with vast labour, the attack was found to be impracticable, or at least too hazardous. The duke of Burgundy accordingly appealed to the court for directions, and Chamillard reached the camp on the 9th, apparently with orders to risk an engagement. Accordingly, after a council of war, the french army passed the Marque on the 10th, and ranged itself in order of battle, the right behind Avelin, and the left extended in front

of Phalempin, and stretching towards Seclin. The allies were immediately in a state of defence, and a heavy cannonade ensued; but the whole operation terminated in the attack of Seclin, which was carried by the french on the 11th. In vain they reconnoitred the position of the allies; even Vendome was compelled to acknowledge it impregnable, and another appeal was made to Versailles. They again received orders to risk an attack; but a new survey only convinced them that it was now too late. Marlborough and Eugene are said to have proposed to become the assailants, and the cautious Berwick admits that such an enterprise would have been fatal to their army, without support for its flanks, or space of ground sufficient for its movements. However, the proposal was counteracted, as usual, by the dutch * deputies; and the french commanders having at length received from the king the expected permission, to abandon their design of relieving Lille by a battle, endeavoured to accomplish their object, by intercepting the communications of the allies. Accordingly they retired on the 15th in four columns to Bac à Berse, encamping between Orchies and Mons en Pouille. The ensuing day they moved to Orq, and crossing the Scheld, occupied a position, extending from the windmill in the vicinity of Pottes, to Aubert la Trinité.

Marlborough at the same time changed his position to observe their movements. On the 17th he extended his line from Peronne to Forest.

* Memoires de Berwick, t. ii. p. 50.

On the 18th he continued to prolong his line from Forest to Leers, having Lannoy behind his centre; and on the 20th, he occupied a new camp, having his left above Leers, and his right at Treffry. We insert the correspondence which passed in this important crisis.

To Lord Godolphin.

" *Fretin, Sept.* 7.—Since my last, I have had yours of the 20th, and am very sorry to see, by the journal and letters from the fleet, that we are not to expect much from the expedition; for it is certain, if the sight of tents and militia can hinder them from landing, they will, in some degree, find them all along the coast.

" M. de Vendome having drawn all the troops possible from the garrisons, and having a great train of artillery joined him from Douay, made his own army and ours believe we should have had a battle on the 5th, which was the king of France's birth-day, so that prince Eugene joined me that morning with 72 squadrons and 26 battalions; but they not moving from their camp, which is in sight of ours, we sent back the foot the same night to the siege, resolving to intrench the front of our camp, which we began to do yesterday. The intrenchment is so far advanced, that I have this morning sent him back all his horse, as also a detachment of 2000 foot, to assist him in the attacking of the counterscarp this night, and for the carrying on the siege with more vigour than hitherto; for it is certain our engineers find much more work than they expected. By the success of this night, we shall be able to guess when we

may have the town; for should we be obliged to fire much more powder and ball, we should be very much put to, to find enough for the citadel, this being the twelfth day our batteries have fired." * * * * * *

"*Fretin, Sept.* 7. * * * * The elector of Hanover has called a council, and the opinions of the generals are given in writing, which are sent to Vienna, that the emperor may give such orders as he thinks proper. Mr. Bulau has promised me the whole in french. He says, by their reasonings nothing can be done; so that the elector, his master, is very uneasy; and that he is not sure, but that he may leave the army before the campaign is ended. The dutch are very uneasy, because the elector is very much dissatisfied at the success that prince Eugene and I have had, and cannot hinder shewing it upon all occasions."

To Prince George of Denmark.

"*Camp at Fretin, Sept.* 7. — Sir; If the french had complied with their threats, I might now have given your royal highness an account of the success of a battle. We drew up the army twice before them, and gave them fair opportunities of coming to us, which having declined, they may now find it more difficult, since we have thrown up a line at the head of our camp, before the *overtures* that lead into the plain, that we may not be subject to sudden alarms, and draw part of the troops from the siege to no purpose. The counterscarp has been delayed for some days: it is now intended for this evening. I send inclosed the disposition

made for it, that your royal highness may please to see at your leisure how difficult a task it is."

To Lord Godolphin.

"*Sept.* 13. — Since my last, M. de Vendome is come so near to us, that we did begin to believe that his intention was to attack us; but yesterday and the day before he did nothing but fire a great quantity of cannon, and this day we have been very quiet, he having drawn his cannon from the batteries on our left, as we think, with a design to see what he can do on our right. We are encamped so near, that there is no possibility of being at ease till Lille is taken. I have been so disturbed these two last nights and days, that I am as hot as if I were in a fever, so that you will excuse my saying no more by this post."

To the Duchess.

"*Sept.* 17. — Whenever I have a minute to myself, I make use of it to write to my dear soul; for M. de Vendome having gathered much more strength together than we could imagine, and being camped so near, that in one hour's time we might be engaged, obliges us to be so very diligent that we have very little rest, by reason of the troops we are obliged to have at the siege, which makes him have near twice as much foot as I have in this army; but I am so well intrenched, that I no ways fear their forcing us. But the siege goes on so very slowly, that I am in perpetual fears that it may continue so long, and consequently consume so much stores, that we may at last not have wherewithal to finish, which would be very cruel. These are my fears, but I desire you will let

nobody know them. I long extremely to have this campaign well ended; for of all the campaigns I have made, this has been the most painful; but I am in the galley, and must row on as long as this war lasts. The prince of Hanover has told me that as soon as the town is taken, he intends to return for Hanover. The french being marched by their right, I have been obliged to march by our left, so that we are now in our camp, where I was before I came to that which I intrenched. I believe the enemy will oblige us to march again this night, they having already sent a detachment towards Oudenard, which they say in their camp they will besiege.

"Since I had finished this letter, I have notice that the french are passing the Scheld by Tournay, so that I shall not march till to-morrow morning."

To Lord Godolphin.

"*Sanguin, Sept.* 17.—I came to this camp last night, the french having begun their march on the 15th, towards their right. I did not march till the next day, that I might be the better informed of their intentions, which seem to be for taking a camp between us and Oudenard, in order to hinder our convoys from Brussels, as also the provisions which come from that side to the army. They have carried their battering train to Tournay, and they say in their army, that they will besiege and take Oudenard, before we shall get Lille. For these last five or six days the siege has advanced very little, which makes every body uneasy. No doubt there will be many letters to the same effect, but I desire not to be named. If the

enemy does not oblige me to march, which I fear they will, I shall go for two hours to the siege; so that I shall not seal this letter till my return, that if I have any thing good from thence I may send it you.

"I have this minute an account that the french army begin to pass the Scheld by Tournay, which makes me resolve not to march till to-morrow. I have been with prince Eugene and the deputies at the siege, and find every thing in a bad way, which gives me the spleen."

In this interval of suspense and expectation, the siege had proceeded with a slowness, which ill accorded with his impatience. On the 6th of September Eugene returned with his detachment to press the approaches, and the trenches were advanced to the glacis of the two horn-works, against which the attacks had been directed. The bastions behind had also been considerably injured by the fire, and twelve batteries incessantly thundered on the place.

On the 7th Eugene resolved to attack the salient angles of the counterscarp on both sides of the Dyle, and above 14,000 men, besides the ordinary guard of the day, were in readiness for this perilous and critical operation. While the troops advanced along the trenches, the cannon continued a tremendous fire: at seven o'clock it suddenly ceased, and after an interval of half an hour three pieces were discharged as a signal. The troops rushed into the covert-way, but were suddenly assailed with a tempest of balls. Two mines were then sprung, and after a desperate effort they were

driven back with great loss, except on two points of the works, where they continued to maintain themselves, against all the efforts of the besieged.

The night of the 8th the assailants secured themselves in their post, and pushed their trenches towards other parts of the works. They were disturbed by a sally from the place on the 10th, but the 11th recovered their lodgment, and prepared new batteries. The siege was delayed by the march of Eugene on the 11th to the camp of Marlborough at Fretin; but the ensuing days the assailants improved their works, raised new batteries, and fired with such effect, that on the 17th, in the evening, they were ready to assault the tenaillons. They, however, advanced with great caution, extending their lodgments along the covert-way, and opening new batteries against the outworks and body of the place. On the 18th Marlborough himself visited the attacks, and held a conference with Eugene and the deputies. He was highly dissatisfied with the slowness of the siege, and in a letter to Godolphin heavily censures the misconduct of the engineers.

"*Sept.* 20. * * * * It is impossible for me to express the uneasiness I suffer for the ill conduct of our engineers at the siege, where I think every thing goes very wrong. It would be a cruel thing, if after we have obliged the enemy to quit all thoughts of relieving the place by force, which they have done, by repassing the Scheld, we should fail of taking it by the ignorance of our engineers, and the want of stores; for we have already fired very near as much as was

demanded for the taking of the town and citadel; and as yet we are not entire masters of the counter-scarp, so that to you I may own my despair of ending this campaign, so as in reason we might have expected. I beg you to assure the queen, that my greatest concern is on her account; for as to myself, I am so tired of the world, that were she not concerned, my affliction would not be great.

" When the fate of Lille is once known, we shall endeavour all we can to bring the french to a general engagement; but as that is what we shall desire, I take it for granted it is what they will avoid. Having drawn all the troops they can together, they are stronger than we; and our letters of yesterday from the Rhine assure us, that the elector of Bavaria was to leave the army the next day, in order to drink the waters near Metz; that the troops, bavaroises and spaniards, had orders to march for this country; and that the elector was to have his residence this winter at Mons.

" I also inclose a letter and draught of what has passed at Lille to this day, which I desire you will, with my duty, give to his royal highness; and also let the queen know that I shall do myself the honour of answering hers of the 31st, which I received yesterday, by the next post; for my head aches at this moment so extremely, that I am not able to write any more at this time."

Reply of Lord Godolphin.

" *Windsor, Sept.* 20.–*Oct.* 1. — Yours of the 20th, which I received yesterday, gave me more

trouble than I can express to you, both upon account of the public, and more particularly from the part I take in so much disquiet and uneasiness, which I am sure you had upon you, when that letter was written.

" I beg of you not to let any misfortune which is occasioned by other people's faults, prey upon your spirits; for it will make you sick, and you must consider that all good people here, who wish well to the public, look upon your life and health, as not only what has been, but what must, and I hope in God will be, the support of us all. I beg you therefore once more not to neglect either of them; and I choose to send this letter by the way of Ostend, hoping it may come some days sooner to you than by Holland, since by a letter from Mr. Erle of the 27th, I find the communication between that place and your army had been opened; and if we may believe some extracts of letters, which we have seen from thence, of the 30th, the attempts of the enemy to hinder it have been very much disappointed.

" In case this should prove true, and that you find yourself able to preserve this communication with Ostend, you will best judge whether any provisions or ordnance stores, that we could send from hence to Ostend, could either be of use to you, or arrive in time. There are two regiments at Portsmouth, under orders to be sent thither, as soon as transports can be any way had for them."

" *Windsor, Sept.* 21. * * * * I was indeed extremely desirous to let you know, as soon as I any way could, that my greatest concern and un-

easiness for the very ill posture of affairs at Lille, which appeared in yours of the 24th, was, lest you should suffer your own mind to be too much affected with it, and let it prevail to the prejudice of your health, which must be the support of all those who really love their country and the public good; and when that is the question, I make no question for my part, but those will shew themselves to be the majority in England, though in the mean time nothing appears so much as the ill will of those, who care but little, either for one or the other."

The urgent representations of the duke incited the assailants to new exertions. On the night of the 20th, the works were deemed sufficiently advanced for an attack of the tenaillons, and the assailants were instantly strengthened by 5000 english troops chosen from the covering army. It was resolved to assault at once the counterscarp of the Lower Dyle, that opposite the bastion on the right, and the places of arms between the hornwork, the bastion, the ravelin on the left of the river, and the covert-way, as far as the Porte de la Madelaine. Prince Eugene placed himself in an advanced battery, to animate the troops by his presence. The signal being given, they rushed to the attack. The fire was tremendous, and the struggle sanguinary. The assailants giving way, Eugene hurried forward, and rallied those who were retreating. In the heat of the engagement a spent musket-ball grazed his forehead, above his left eye, and struck off his hat, but fortunately occasioned no serious fracture. He was with difficulty per-

suaded to retire to his quarter, while the attack was continued. After a terrible conflict, however, the assailants succeeded in establishing themselves on the right of the angle of the left demi-bastion of the tenaillon, and on the left of the places of arms in the covert-way, opposite to the principal breach. This advantage was purchased with the loss of nearly 2000 men.

On the ensuing morning the british general visited his colleague, and finding him preparing to mount on horseback, and resume his duty, pressed on him to remain in his quarters till he was perfectly recovered. He succeeded only by promising to take on himself the superintendance of the siege, as well as of his own army. The care and anxiety in which this additional command involved him, were increased by the unexpected discovery, that the stores began to fail, and that there was not sufficient ammunition to continue the attack more than four days. He was even importuned to raise the siege, by the dutch deputies, who were alarmed with the difficulty and expence of the enterprise.

During the confinement of Eugene, Marlborough superintended the siege, with as much activity and vigilance as if he had no other occupation, riding daily from his head quarters to the approaches, and returning in the evening. On the 23d, in particular, he was in the trenches, when a grand attack was made on the tenaillon, on the left, and part of the counterscarp. He himself issued the requisite orders, animated the troops by his presence, witnessed their successful lodgment in the covert-way, and did not retire, till they were

masters of the whole tenaillon. A letter written to Godolphin on the ensuing day, will shew the weight of his cares and labours.

"*Sept.* 24.—Since my last, prince Eugene has received a wound in his head, which I thank God is no ways dangerous; and I hope to-morrow or next day he may be abroad. Ever since Friday, that he was wounded, I have been obliged to be every day at the siege, which, with the vexation of its going so ill, I am almost dead. We made a third attack last night, and are not yet masters of the whole counterscarp; but that which is yet worse, those who have the charge of the stores, have declared to the deputies that the opiniatrety of the siege is such, that they have not stores sufficient for the taking of the town. Upon which, the prince has desired to speak with me to-morrow morning. My next will acquaint you of what is resolved, but I fear you must expect nothing good. I have this afternoon a letter from lieut.-general Erle, from Ostend. He is ill of the gout. The enemy has cut in three several places the canal of Nieuport, by which they have put that country under water, to hinder our communication with Ostend. However, I shall find ways of letting him know what I desire. I am so vexed at the misbehaviour of our engineers, that I have no patience, and beg your excuse that I say no more till the next post."

Notwithstanding these successes, the efforts of the assailants were opposed with equal spirit by the garrison. To remedy the want of ammunition, which began to be felt in the place, a body of

horsemen, each loaded with a sack of powder, were sent by Vendome to cut their way through the besieging force; and though many fell victims to their temerity, they succeeded in carrying such a supply into the fortress, as considerably raised the spirit and augmented the resources of the garrison. *

In the midst of these operations, Marlborough had the satisfaction to receive a new and flattering proof of gratitude from king Charles. On the first intelligence of the victory at Oudenard, the king eagerly seized the opportunity, not only to repeat his offer of the administration of the Netherlands, but even proposed to grant it for life.

King Charles to the Duke of Marlborough.

" *Barcelona, Aug.* 8. — My lord, duke, and prince; If your letter of June 26th, delivered to me by general Stanhope, had not been very agreeable to me, you may believe, my lord, that I was transported with one, which I have received from the duke of Savoy, announcing to me the recent victory at Oudenard. I want expressions to testify the share I take in this new glory, which is added to your skill, merit, and courage. Since all your great actions in this war have had no other object than the recovery of my monarchy, you may judge of my heartfelt gratitude to you, for

* For the contents of this chapter, we are principally indebted to the Correspondence — The Journal of the Siege, in Lamberti, t. v. — The accounts in Lediard and the foreign biographers, as well as the Memoires de Berwick—Brodrick—Milner—Vie du Prince Eugene, and other authorities.

the beneficial effects to my cause, which must result from this glorious victory, not less perhaps than the reduction of my whole monarchy, if you will continue the same vigour in the prosecution of the war one year more.

" Thus, my lord, it seems that to the hand which has secured the liberty of Germany and the Netherlands, Spain will also owe hers. With this confidence, you will find me, my prince, always willing to renew the patent for the government of my Low Countries, which I sent you two years ago, and to extend it for your life. You may depend on the fulfilment of my royal word; and be assured that I will, in conformity with this promise, expedite the dispatches, as soon as I am in possession of Madrid. I need not recommend to you the propriety of maintaining this secret, as well from the consideration due to the elector palatine, as from a fear of giving umbrage to the States." *

Many of the duke's letters contain allusions to this grant, which was afterwards repeatedly made. His motives for declining an offer, which he was evidently anxious to accept, were, the fear of offending the dutch, of acting contrary to the opinion of the british cabinet, and of drawing on himself the importunities of the duchess, by whom it was vehemently opposed. He, however, flattered himself, that at some future period he might enjoy so honourable and lucrative a station; for he observes, in a letter to Godolphin, " This must be known to nobody but the queen; for

* From the french original.

should it be known before the peace, it would create inconveniencies in Holland, and I beg to assure the queen, that it is not compliment, but real duty, that when the peace happens, if she shall not think it for her honour and interest that I accept of this great offer, I will decline it with all the submission imaginable."

CHAPTER 75.

1708.

Necessity of opening a new communication for the passage of supplies. — Landing of general Erle, with the troops employed for the descent at Ostend. — Measures adopted to facilitate the passage of convoys by that route. — March of a grand convoy to the camp. — Action at Wynendale. — The enemy repulsed, and the convoy preserved by general Webb. — New and ineffectual attempts of the french to cut off the supplies of the confederates. — Movements of Marlborough. — Death of Overkirk. — Capture of Leffinghen by the enemy. — Prosecution of the siege, and surrender of Lille. — Farther plans of the british commander. — Precautions of Marlborough and Eugene to obtain supplies. — Attack of the citadel of Lille. — Plan of the french to surprise Brussels. — Marlborough and Eugene force the passage of the Scheld, and defeat the design. — Correspondence of Marlborough on his situation and views.

As the enemies were completely masters of the route to Brussels, by which the army had hitherto received succours and supplies, it became necessary to open a new channel of communication. For this purpose, Ostend offered the only eligible point, and the services of the troops who had been selected for the descent on the french coast were called into action.

This expedition, which in the early part of the campaign had excited such lively hopes, and

occupied so prominent a place in the correspondence, had failed in its principal object. General Erle, who was chosen for the command, was the most improper officer who could have been selected, for an enterprise which required decision, activity, and confidence. On the contrary, his letters prove that he looked rather to difficulty than to success, and that he not only acknowledged his own unfitness, but utterly disapproved all such hazardous undertakings. His original instructions directed him to make an attempt on the coast near St. Valory, where it was expected he might be supported by a detachment from the army of Marlborough. But as no detachment of sufficient force could be spared, he was ordered to effect a descent on the coasts of Normandy or Britanny. The appearance of military preparations, and the assembly of the militia, were, however, sufficient to deter him from the attempt; and after lingering for some time in the bay of La Hogue, he returned to the Downs.

The design being utterly relinquished, Godolphin was desirous of transporting the troops to Portugal; but his wishes were overruled by Marlborough, who felt the necessity of a competent force at Ostend, to maintain his communications with England. Having obtained the approbation of the cabinet, he imparted the proper orders to general Erle, by captain Armstrong, the same confidential officer who had arranged, with prince Eugene, the movements before the battle of Oudenard.

The troops reached Ostend at the moment when their services were rendered doubly necessary,

from the position of the enemy, and were accompanied by a fleet of transports, conveying an abundant store of ammunition, and other requisites. General Erle being now employed in a service adapted to his talents, carried into effect the instructions which he had received from the commander in chief, for facilitating the passage of supplies from the coast to the covering army. He partially drained an inundation, which the enemy had caused between Ostend and Nieuport, occupied Oudenburg, and threw bridges over the canal of Nieuport, near Leffinghen, where he also established a post. Having thus restored the communication, a large convoy was prepared, and 700 waggons were detached from the army of observation, to receive the supplies. This operation naturally called forth the same care, vigilance, and activity, as had attended the passage of the first convoy from Brussels. Vendome and Berwick were both desirous to attempt its destruction; but the task was finally confided to count de la Motte, who from long residence in these districts, was supposed to be intimately acquainted with the country. He was remanded from the vicinity of Brussels, and sent to Bruges, with a corps amounting to 22,000 men, which was deemed more than sufficient to overpower any covering force that could be furnished from the main army.

Marlborough, who yet continued in the camp at Lannoy, first detached two bodies of troops, consisting of 12 battalions of infantry and 1500 horse, under generals Landsberg and Els, to protect its passage. On learning the movements of count

de la Motte, he, on the 26th, sent a new detachment of 12 battalions, under general Webb, to advance as far as Tourout, in order to protect the march of the convoy from Cochlaer, through the wood of Wynendale; and soon afterwards, 26 squadrons and 12 battalions, under Cadogan, marched to Hoghlede, to cover its passage between Tourout and the camp.

On the 27th of September the convoy departed from Ostend, crossed the canal of Nieuport, at Leffinghen, during that night and the morning, and directed its course by Slype and Moerdyke, to defile through Cochlaer, behind the wood of Wynendale. The moment it commenced its march, the utmost vigilance and activity were displayed by all the officers on the line of its passage. General Webb detached 1600 infantry, under the command of brigadier Landsberg, to strengthen the corps posted at Oudenburg, with orders after covering the convoy, to rejoin him at Tourout. This force arrived in time to prevent the occupation of Oudenburg by the enemy. Meanwhile the horse under Cadogan had reached Hoghlede, and count Lottum, with 150 dragoons, was sent forward to explore the road by which the convoy was advancing, and join the escort. Approaching Ichteghem, however, he discovered several french squadrons, and returned to Tourout to give the alarm. On this intelligence, general Webb moved forward with the infantry, count Lottum, with his small party of cavalry, forming the advanced guard, with orders to gain Ichteghem, by the way of Wynendale. Reaching Wynendale, they perceived

the enemy, through the opening of the plain, between a low coppice and the wood. The quarter-masters and grenadiers were instantly formed, and posted in the coppice, while general Webb, with the 150 horse, advanced to reconnoitre and amuse the enemy. As fast as the infantry arrived, they were posted in order of battle, in the opening between the wood of Wynendale and the coppice, where the quarter-masters and grenadiers were stationed. Scarcely had six battalions formed, before the enemy commenced a heavy cannonade; but the small party of horse kept its ground with such firmness, that general Webb had time to complete his dispositions. The troops formed two lines, the left wing extending beyond the coppice, to prevent the enemy from turning that flank, and the right resting on the wood and castle of Wynendale. In the wood on the right was the regiment of Heukelom, forming an ambuscade, and another regiment was thrown into the coppice on the left. Parties of grenadiers were posted among the brush-wood on each side, for the same purpose, with orders not to discover themselves, till they could take the assailants in flank. The regiments which escorted the convoy formed a third line, as they arrived.

On the first news that the convoy had departed, count de la Motte advanced to Oudenburg, but the post being already occupied, he hastened by Ghistel, to intercept it in the defile of Wynendale. Finding himself anticipated by the allies, whom he descried at five o'clock in the afternoon, he opened a cannonade, which lasted two hours. In the in-

terval he formed his troops in several lines, the infantry in front, the cavalry in the rear; and then advanced, in full confidence, to overwhelm a force which did not amount to one half of his own. Within a few minutes the enemy began the attack, but approaching the allied lines, were received by such a fire from the ambuscade in the wood, that the left wing gave way on the centre. The fire of the opposite ambuscade was then opened, and soon threw their whole line into confusion. They, however, still advanced, and broke two battalions; but reinforcements being drawn up from the rear, they were repulsed. They made a third attempt, but the fire in front and flanks again throwing back their wings on the centre, they retired in the utmost dismay. Neither the threats nor example of their officers could induce them to return to the charge; but after some distant and scattered vollies, they feebly relinquished the contest.

Towards the close of the action, major-general Cadogan came up with some squadrons of horse, and offered to charge the retreating enemy; but it was not deemed advisable to encounter so superior a force of cavalry; and the commanders contented themselves with securing the convoy, which during the action had passed in rear of the wood, and arrived the same evening at Rousselaer. The next day it reached Menin, where it was welcomed with exultation; and on the last day of September, Marlborough was gratified by its passage through the lines of his camp, which in the interval had been established between Pont à Marque and Menin.

The correspondence will shew the effect of this brilliant action, and the opinion which the commander in chief entertained of general Webb, by whom it was achieved.

To Lord Godolphin.

" *Sept.* 27. — You will have seen by my last letter, the unhappy circumstances we are in, by the very ill conduct of our engineers and others. Upon the wounding of prince Eugene, I thought it absolutely necessary to inform myself of every thing of the siege ; for before, I did not meddle in any thing but the covering of it. Upon examination, I find they did not deal well with the prince, for when I told him that there did not remain powder and ball for above four days, he was very much surprised. I own to you, that I fear we have something more in our misfortunes than ignorance. Our circumstances being thus, and the impossibility of getting a convoy from Brussels, obliged me to take measures for getting some ammunition from Ostend, which we could never have attempted, but for the good luck of the english battalions being there.

" Having time, I begin to write in the morning, but as the letters are not to go till the evening, I hope to send you some certainty of the convoy ; I having sent yesterday major-general Cadogan with 26 squadrons and 12 battalions to meet them, so that they might come with the greater safety, with which we must do our best ; for should this not come safe, I am afraid we must not flatter ourselves of hoping to get any other, though you may be sure we shall leave nothing unattempted. It

is impossible to express the trouble this matter has given me; for I am sensible that not only her majesty, but all the common cause must suffer, if we miscarry in this undertaking, which we have but too much reason to apprehend. Our letters from Germany assure us, that on the 15th of this month a great detachment was made for this country, and that the elector of Bavaria is to come with them, which will give no little alarm in Holland."

"*Sept.* 29.—I have kept this mail till now, that you may be informed of the success we have had, in bringing our convoy safe from Ostend. I must refer you to the particulars sent to the secretary's office, my head having ached extremely for these last two days. I must own to you, that I have not strength to bear long the necessary trouble I undergo; but I now hope for some ease, since prince Eugene will be abroad to-morrow. Last night, the french attempted to send in succours and powder into Lille. About 300 men forced their way through a palatine regiment; several were blown up and killed, and about 40 men and 4 officers taken prisoners, the rest returned to Douay. Our letters run much risk of being read by the enemy, which makes it not safe to write some things I have a mind to say."

"*Oct.* 1.—In my last I had not time to give you any account of our last action, but that of referring you to what was writ to the secretary's office; I have since had a particular account. Our loss in killed and wounded is very near 1000; by what the enemy left dead on the place, they must

have lost at least three times as many as we. They had above double our number, all our horse, except 300, and 2000 foot, being sent on before, for the security of the convoy, so that there were not above 8000 men; and it is said, by the officers who were left wounded on the field of battle, that they had 40 battalions and 46 squadrons, as also cannon.

"Webb and Cadogan have on this occasion, as they always will do, behaved themselves extremely well. The success of this vigorous action is, in a great measure, owing to them. If they had not succeeded, and our convoy had been lost, the consequence must have been the raising of the siege the next day. All her majesty's subjects have had the good fortune this campaign in all actions, to distinguish themselves; so that I should not do them justice, if I did not beg the queen, that when this campaign shall be ended, she will be pleased to make a promotion among the generals of this army only, which will be a mark of her favour and their merit; for hitherto, though almost all the action has been in this army, yet every general has advanced equally with them, though two parts of three of them have not so much as served this war. If the queen and prince approve of what I desire, in favour of this army, I should be glad it might not be known to any body, till I have an opportunity of giving the names for their approbation. Count Corneille, M. Overkirk's son, has on this occasion behaved himself extremely well."

Reply of Lord Godolphin.

" *Sept. 27.–Oct.* 8. — According to your commands, I have communicated to the queen and to the prince the favour of yours of the first of October. They both seemed very well pleased with the account of your success at Wynendale, and the satisfaction you express for the very good conduct of your troops upon that occasion. They agreed very readily to the distinction you desire for the general officers of your army, at the next promotion; and the prince added, it was his opinion, that distinction ought to have been made much sooner."

The safe arrival of this convoy gave new energy to the army; while the recovery of Eugene relieved Marlborough from a load of care and labour, though not from anxiety. The besiegers continued to advance by the tardy movements of the sap, to raise new batteries, to complete the lodgments which they had effected, and to fill up the ditch. At length, at mid-day, on the third of October, they carried the tenaillon, under the direction of Eugene, while the besieged were sunk in repose; and the ensuing night established themselves on the salient places of arms, opposite to the great breaches. The lodgments were soon completed, new batteries mounted, and the trenches extended along the front attacked.

The slow, but irresistible progress of the besiegers, induced Vendome to make a new effort. He moved with a considerable detachment from the Scheld, passed through Ghent, joined count de la Motte, and advancing between Moerdyk and

the canal from Bruges to Plassendael, opened the sluices, and inundated the country to the very border of the Dyke. He also reinforced the garrison of Nieuport. He thus hoped to render the communication utterly impracticable, by intercepting the passage between Ostend and Leffinghen, where a post of 1000 foot and 600 horse was stationed.

This movement induced Marlborough to draw towards the enemy. Having sent forward a considerable detachment, he left a part of his army at Ronques, at the disposition of Eugene, and moving with the rest, crossed the Lys at Menin. On the 7th of October he encamped between Rombeck and Hoglede, having his head-quarters at Rousselaer. Determined to attack the french at Oudenburg, he the next day advanced to the heath of Wynendale; but on his arrival was disappointed to hear that Vendome had retired. On this news he returned to Rousselaer, and sent forward the infantry of the second line, under the prussian general Lottum, to be near the siege, but recalled him on the news that the enemy were increasing their force at Ghent and Bruges.

The inundation caused by Vendome, put a momentary suspension to the arrival of stores and provisions. A new expedient was therefore devised. The ammunition was packed in skins, and conveyed in flat boats from Ostend to Leffinghen, where it was received by carriages, mounted on high wheels, and conveyed to the camp. In this difficult task, Cadogan distinguished himself, as he did on every occasion which required extraor-

dinary diligence and activity, and the convoys were brought in safety, in spite of the hostile batteries, and the incessant attacks of armed gallies.

The critical situation of affairs rendered it necessary to hold conferences with Eugene and the deputies, for the continuance of their difficult enterprise; and the chiefs of the army accordingly assembled at Menin on the 11th of October. This meeting was rendered melancholy by the loss of the veteran Overkirk, who continued to act with his usual alacrity, till a few hours of his death, being under arms the whole night of the 22d. Worn out with the fatigues of the service, and the infirmities of premature age, he expired, in his 67th year, in the camp, while the two generals and deputies were arranging their operations. The loss of this active, brave, and devoted veteran, drew a tear of sympathy from both the commanders, particularly from Marlborough, who had ample cause to admire and estimate his devotion and docility, so different from the captious spirit of his colleagues. In recompence for his services, Marlborough obtained a pension from the british government for his son, count Corneille. Overkirk was succeeded in the command by count Tilly, who, to the activity of a less advanced age, added equal zeal and devotion.

We shall refer to the correspondence for those particulars which we have purposely passed over.

To Lord Godolphin.

" *Rousselaer, Oct.* 9. — You will know by this post that we are in great want of another convoy, so that I marched on Sunday morning, with 110

squadrons and 60 battalions, and camped that night at Rousselaer; and yesterday I was in hopes to have been in sight of the duke of Vendome, who was encamped at Oudenburg, to hinder our having any thing from Ostend. But as soon as he was informed of my being at Rousselaer, he decamped, and marched to Bruges. During the time he has been at Oudenburg, he has cut all the dikes; so that the whole country is under water, which makes it impracticable for our carts to pass; but I have sent to Ostend, to see if they can put the powder into bags, which may be brought by horses; for we hope to find a passage by which they may come. God knows how this siege may end; I have but little faith, and am quite uneasy, but resolved to persist, as long as there is the least hope.

"Major-general Webb goes for England; I write to her majesty by him. I hope she will be pleased to tell him, that she is very well satisfied with his services, and that when she makes a promotion, this winter, he may be sure of being a lieut.-general, which really this last action makes his due.

"I am returned to this place, where I am conveniently camped, as well for assisting at the siege, as for assisting and protecting what we may get from Ostend. I dare not write some things I should be glad to say to you, which gives me a great deal of trouble; for I see every thing is going to distraction, and that it is not in my power to help it.

"The electoral prince of Hanover is this day

gone for Ostend, in order to return to Hanover. The enemy has drowned the country to that degree, that he could take no part of his baggage with him."

"*Tourout, Oct.* 8.—The uneasy march of this day cannot hinder me from repeating again the obligation the queen and all the allies have to major-general Webb, who will give you this letter; and I beg you will present him to the queen; and were it not for measures I am obliged, for the queen's service, to keep with the States General, I should desire her majesty would declare him a lieutenant-general, which he does extremely deserve. But as it must be done with management with them, I humbly desire the queen will assure him, that when she makes a promotion this winter, he shall be one; and I will be answerable, that not only now, but at all times, he shall deserve it from her."

From Lord Godolphin, in reply.

"*Newmarket, Oct.* 7.–18.—Major-general Webb brought me your letter to this place. I had heard of his coming before I left London, so the queen was prepared to use him very kindly, and with a great deal of distinction, as I find she has done, both by what he says himself, and by a letter which I have received from her by him. But I am very uneasy, and so I find he is, at his having made himself incapable of serving with you for the rest of the campaign, when there may yet be great occasion for men of service. Might it not be an expedient, if the queen should write to you, to give him the distinction of acting as a

lieut.-general now immediately? or if this has its objections, might she not desire you now to acquaint the States, that she intends a promotion? Pray let me have your answer, if either of these will do, that I may speak to her majesty to write accordingly, or what else you would have done in this matter."

To Lord Godolphin.

"*Oct.* 19. — Having had no letters since Mr. Craggs went from hence, I have little more to acquaint you, than that the waters are so grown upon us, that our communication with Ostend is at an end for some time. During the time we had the passage open, we have got above 1600 barrels of powder, and a great many other things, which are of use.

"Poor M. Overkirk died yesterday, by which her majesty will save the pension I am told she gave to lord Grantham. It would be an act of goodness and generosity, if the queen would be pleased to give some part of it to count Corneille, who is as virtuous and as brave a man as lives. His father has been able, I fear, to leave him nothing. If I were not sure that he did deserve, and would be grateful to the queen, I would not say so much for him.

"We hope in four or five days to give a general storm, if they will venture it, which I fear they will. I wish I may be mistaken, since it will cost a great many lives. God continues to bless us with good weather."

After in vain attempting to prevent the passage of convoys over the inundation, Vendome resorted

to new expedients. Langeon, who commanded the gallies of Dunkirk, prepared at Nieuport a flotilla manned with troops of the marine, to act on the canal, and a force of 50 companies of grenadiers and 1000 dragoons was detached to second his enterprises. A species of amphibious warfare now took place; and a vigorous though ineffectual cannonade was maintained as well on the allied posts, as on the boats employed in conveying ammunition and stores. At length, to intercept the communication entirely, the enemy determined to attack Leffinghen, which had not only afforded protection to the allied troops, but cut off the communication with Nieuport and other places on the frontier, and was now occupied by a considerable corps of english and dutch infantry, who were sustained by another post beyond Dixmund. Trenches were accordingly opened along the causeway of Bruges, and pushed with all the rapidity which the narrow front, and the difficulties of the ground, would permit. The assailants profited by the negligence of the troops guarding the post. Taking advantage of a dark and rainy night, they opened a heavy fire from the trenches, to occupy the attention of the garrison, while parties of grenadiers traversed the inundation, on each side of the Dyke, to attack the rear, and cut off reinforcements from the small camp on the coast. This design succeeded. Fifty men who guarded a post on the side of Nieuport, were put to the sword, and the front of the village was instantly assaulted. The officers being absent from their duty, the garrison was completely

surprised, and yielded at discretion, with a considerable sum of money, 1200 barrels of powder, and other ammunition.

At the moment, however, when the french commanders deemed their labours crowned by this successful enterprise, the fate of Lille was decided.

The besiegers had continued to extend themselves along the covert-way, and in spite of the gallant resistance made by the garrison, had perfected their lodgments, augmented their batteries, and by mines, and other warlike artifices, continued to ruin the defences of the place. On the 16th, they commenced the descent and passage of the principal ditch. The breaching batteries were now augmented, and no less than 55 pieces of heavy artillery, with 36 mortars and howitzers, were mounted in the lodgments on the covert-way and outworks. Amidst a carnage, which seldom occurs even at a siege, the decisive moment approached. On the 21st, crowds of volunteers, carrying forward sand-bags and fascines, the enlargement of the trenches, the completion of the passage across the ditch, and a tremendous fire of artillery for 24 hours, alarmed the garrison with a prospect of an hourly assault. On the 22d of October, therefore, after 60 days' siege, Boufflers beat a parley at four in the afternoon. Hostages were immediately exchanged, and conferences held for the surrender. Eugene treated the garrison with the generosity which their brave defence so justly merited. He paid the most flattering compliments to the heroic governor, and even left him to regulate his own conditions. The gate de la Madelaine was yielded

to the allies at mid-day on the 23d, and the remains of the garrison, amounting to 5000 men, retired into the citadel on the 25th. The sick and wounded were to be conveyed to Douay, and prisoners on both sides exchanged. The government of the place was confided to the prince of Holstein Beck, who had distinguished himself by his skill and judgment in the siege.

By the capitulation of Lille, and the attack which was preparing against the citadel, the leading object of the campaign was nearly attained. Marlborough therefore resumed his original plan of carrying the war into the heart of France, and earnestly pressed the treasurer to obtain a powerful augmentation of troops, for the accomplishment of a design, which he considered as the only means to obtain a speedy and honourable peace. He made this request a particular article in his instructions to sir Richard Temple *, who conveyed the news of the surrender, and repeatedly and strongly enforced it in his subsequent letters. He also imparted the resolution adopted by Eugene and himself, to keep the field, till they had effected the reduction of Ghent and Bruges, the possession of which was not only necessary for the completion of their conquests, but even for the safety of their quarters. He farther stated, that either he, or his illustrious colleague, must remain in Holland during the winter, as well for the purpose of forwarding the military preparations, and tranquillising the dutch, as for guarding against

* Afterwards lord Cobham.

any sudden and desperate effort on the part of the enemy.

While the attack was preparing against the citadel of Lille, measures were adopted by the allied generals to obviate the difficulties in which they were placed, by drawing their supplies from the french frontier. At La Bassée they had stationed 13 battalions and 30 squadrons, and at Lens another considerable corps. Under the protection of these posts, numerous parties were continually pushed into the neighbouring province of Artois, and secured the greater part of the crops, which had either not been removed, or had hitherto escaped their researches. On the other hand, a detachment was sent to the side of Dixmund, to draw supplies of corn and cattle from the district of Furnes.

Meanwhile they acted with their usual vigour and decision against the citadel. The attack was already arranged, and the french garrison had scarcely quitted the town, before the troops were employed, in forming epaulements on the esplanade, and completing works to protect the opening of the trenches. At the same time, the extensive circumvallation was contracted, and a new line drawn from the gate des Malades, to Haubourdin, from whence it was to be continued to the Lower Dyle.

On the 29th of October the trenches were opened, and the sap advanced to within forty paces of the exterior covert-way. The besieging force was augmented with nine battalions, and continued to push their approaches in spite of the

inundations formed by the enemy. On the 8th they lodged themselves on the two salient angles of the covert-way, and though checked by several vigorous sallies, still continued their progress. On the night of the 16th, they seized a place of arms, and on the 19th were masters of two points of the second counterscarp. The interval between that day and the 22d was employed in enlarging their communications and strengthening their lodgments. The attack and defence were maintained with equal spirit, and the chiefs so lavishly exposed their persons, that Eugene had an aide-de-camp killed by his side, the prince of Bevern received a musket-shot in the head, and M. de Surville, one of the principal officers of the french garrison, was mortally wounded.

During this important crisis, Vendome and the duke of Burgundy continued in the camp of Salsoy. Awed by the spirit and perseverance of their antagonists, they appear to have been confounded, and to have spent the time in discussing plans of operation. What was proposed by Vendome was generally thwarted by Berwick, or over-ruled by the prince; and the hour, which was to decide the fate of the place, found them still uncertain, whether to restrict their enterprises to a war of convoys, or to make a great and desperate effort for raising the siege. Appeals were again made to the court, and Chamillard reached the camp on the 2d of November, with injunctions to the chiefs to avoid a general engagement.

The letters of Marlborough, written at this period, will supply the necessary explanation on his views and circumstances.

To Lord Godolphin.

" *Nov.* 1. — Since my last I have had none from you; besides, I have instructed sir Richard Temple so fully with all my thoughts, that I shall not for some time trouble you with long letters. We are carrying on our attack on the citadel, and hope by the middle of next month to be masters of it; for we do not think they will stay the last extremity. If they do, they must expect no capitulation. We have been blesssd with extraordinary good weather, so that we have very few sick in the army, though we are now afraid the weather is changing; yet it will not be so troublesome to us as it must have been before we were masters of the town, for now the greatest part of the men, that attack the citadel, are quartered in the town, which is a very great ease."

" *Rousselaer, Nov.* 6. — Having a safe opportunity of sending this letter to Brussels, I shall write with more freedom than I have done for some time past. The greatest difficulty we now meet with, is the want of corn; so that we are more apprehensive of wanting bread, than of any thing the enemy can do. In order to see what corn we can get from the county of Artois, I sent yesterday major-general Cadogan to La Bassée, where there are already two thousand horse, and ten battalions of foot. He has taken with him ten squadrons more.

" The french are expecting detachments both from the Rhine and Dauphiné, being resolved to make their utmost effort in this country. I hope we may take the citadel before they come, though

we go on very slowly, being very careful of losing as few men as possible; for we cannot yet guess when this campaign may end, but as soon as we have the citadel, we shall then be more at liberty to act against the enemy; and I do assure you that our intentions are to do all that lies in our power to bring them to action. They give out, that as soon as the troops they expect join them, they will seek us. These resolutions seem more agreeable to the beginning of a campaign than the month of November. If God blesses us with farther success before we go into winter-quarters, there is no doubt of having a good peace; but if all things remain as they now are, the only way of having a speedy and good peace is, to augment the troops, so as that we may enter France the next campaign with a good superiority; and that the fleet may be assisting to us, which, with the assistance of Almighty God, is what will, in all likelihood, bring this troublesome war to a happy end, which is, I believe, more wished for by your humble servant, than by any other body living."

"*Nov.* 16. — I know not whether it proceeds from the enemy, or that the letters are not come from England, but we have had none these last two days. Believing that this letter will go safe to Brussels, I shall venture to write more freely than by the post. We have been extreme uneasy for want of corn, not having in our stores for longer than this day, which obliged me to send Cadogan to La Bassée, where we got some, but not sufficient to make us subsist the remaining part of this month; so that Thursday last, I detached the

earl of Stair with ten squadrons of horse, and as many battalions of foot, for Dixmund, with orders to attack the fort the enemy has on the canal at that place. He succeeded so well, that he made a lieutenant-colonel and upwards of 200 men prisoners of war, by which we have secured a passage into that country, and I hope to draw subsistence sufficient for the army from thence. They have already sent a thousand oxen and cows, and great numbers of sheep to Lille, where provision was much wanted. Notwithstanding the arbitrary government with which they have been governed, they are no ways inclined for us; but on the contrary, give as little assistance as is possible, suffering their bills to be protested, though they have by them an advantage of 7 *per cent.* But I hope, when we have the citadel, every thing will mend, which we think will be by the end of this month. It might be sooner, but that we have great management both of our men and ammunition; besides, we employ also this time in repairing the breaches of the town. As we have had the visible protection of God Almighty on several occasions this campaign, we both hope and pray, that he will give us farther success, which we shall endeavour to seek, when we are masters of the citadel. Considering the losses we have had at this siege, and the frequent actions with the enemy, yet we are in as good a condition as can be expected, at this time of year, we having very few sick, and both men and officers full of resolution.

"I beg of you to assure the queen, that I act with all my heart and soul, that this campaign may

end very much for her glory and safety. The situation of the enemy, as well as ours, is such, that I think it impossible for either to take their winter-quarters before we have an action, which, if it can be brought to be a general one, will decide the fate of this war. I could wish it might come time enough for the opening of the parliament; but I fear it must be the month of December, before we shall be able to send you good news.

" Not knowing when I may have another opportunity of writing freely, I must again press you to take, what I believe to be the only way of bringing France to a speedy and good peace, which is, that you should not only resolve in England upon an augmentation of troops, but lose no time in prevailing with the States General to do the same; for their declaration would have a greater effect in France. I have, and shall continue to press them in Holland, which I hope may have its effect, their deputies here assuring me, that they are convinced there is no other way of bringing this war to a happy end. We could wish here, that the elector of Hanover and the duke of Savoy could have continued with their armies some time longer in the field, the french threatening us with the great numbers of troops they will bring into this country."

From Lord Godolphin, in reply.

" *Nov.* 12.–23. — It is above a fortnight since we have any letters from you by the post. I had the favour of yours of the 6th by Brussels, of the 8th by Ostend, and this day it was no small pleasure to me to see the outside of yours of the 16th,

by the way of Brussels; but the inside of it does not give me so much satisfaction. I am sorry it will be at least a week before you have the citadel, and after that to find you think of beginning a new campaign, when you have been in the field a month longer than ever was known. Can you hope the good weather will continue to the end of the year? I am sorry to find you think there must be yet more action. If that must be, I believe it will be, because you have a mind to disturb their winter-quarters, for I cannot think they will pretend to hinder yours. Lastly, I am sorry to find, that, be the event of these things as one could wish, we must not hope to see you here till Christmas, or very near it.

"In the mean time, till you do come, give me leave to assure you, no endeavour shall be wanting, nor pains omitted, on my part, to make every thing go on as you could wish it might do, at the opening of the parliament. I have got it into the speech, that an augmentation should be desired for Flanders, and I hope it will be granted.

"I have been a good while of opinion, that somebody should be sent on purpose from the queen to the States, to press them very earnestly to declare themselves upon that matter. I have written to know your thoughts upon this for a month together, but not having had any answer, I believe my letters have not yet come to your hands. Upon the whole, as things now stand, I believe nobody will be sent, till there be a return from the parliament to the speech, by the addresses of either house; and I hope this will be such as may very

much contribute to the success of him that carries them over.

" I have had the honour to read your letter to the queen. She seemed to be much concerned that we were like to be so long without seeing you.

" I think you have but too much reason to repine at the coldness and indifference of the elector of Hanover and the duke of Savoy. For my part, I cannot help thinking there is most cause to complain of the latter. He has had most done for him, and had most in his power to do for us."

Marlborough was not however swayed by the more timid policy of the treasurer. But sensible that the most effectual mode of suppressing and foiling the cabals at home, was by success abroad, he persisted in his purpose; and we find his letters still filled with suggestions and proposals, for closing the actual campaign with glory, and opening the next with an equal prospect of success.

The french had observed the progress of the allies, in their attacks against the citadel, with greater tranquillity, because a plan was formed to divert them from their purpose, or make some amends for the loss of the place, by a more important capture. This design did not escape the vigilance of Marlborough, as we find by a letter to lord Godolphin, from Helchin, without date, but evidently written at this crisis.

" Yours of the 27th came so late, that I had not time by the last post to give you my thoughts, nor, indeed, have I as yet any time for other thoughts than what is now acting in this country, on the

success of which, I think, depend the liberties of all Europe. The french are endeavouring to get all the troops that is possible together, and by the intelligence we have from M. de Vendome's army, as well as the motions of the duke of Berwick, it looks as if their resolutions were to act in Brabant; and though this army is very much weakened by the siege, I am resolved to venture every thing, rather than let them take Brussels, which, I believe, is their design, believing me too weak for the relief of it. I beg you to assure the queen, that I have that duty and love for her, that I shall have no reserve in venturing every thing that may be for her service, hoping that God will protect her just cause. If it pleases God to give us one success more this campaign, I hope that may bring such a peace as may give her security abroad for the rest of her life. I do, from my soul, wish there were a better prospect at home; but by all the accounts I have, I see nothing but confusion, which is another argument for my engaging the enemy, if possible; for they will otherwise reap the advantage of our division."

At length this design was developed. While the french troops commanded the course of the Scheld, the elector of Bavaria, who had been recently called from the Rhine, prepared to surprise or capture Brussels, where his efforts were likely to be seconded by numerous partisans, and where the allies had formed their principal magazines. He assembled 15,000 men at Mons, and marched from thence on the 22d of November. Arriving before Brussels, he summoned the place; but M.

Paschal, who had been appointed governor, with a garrison of 7000 men, rejected all proposals, and made preparations for resistance. Trenches were accordingly opened, by the elector, on the night of the 24th, between the gates of Louvain and Namur, and pushed with such rapidity, that the assailants speedily lodged themselves on the covert-way. In this imminent danger, the governor dispatched courier after courier to Marlborough, and in the mean time awed the partisans of the elector, by arresting the most disaffected, and by holding forth the prospect of instant succour, to deter those who were only waiting the event to declare for the enemy.

On receiving intelligence of the danger, Marlborough proceeded to execute his purpose of relieving the place, by forcing the enemy in their strong positions behind the Scheld. This admirable enterprise, which was worthy the rest of so extraordinary a campaign, was concerted between the two great commanders, and carried into effect with equal energy, secrecy, and decision. The difficulty may be more readily conceived, when it is recollected that the front of the enemy was protected by a wide and deep river, which was bounded by precipitous banks, and that they had employed three months in fortifying their position. Their posts extended from Tournay to the vicinity of Ghent; but their principal force was collected above, below, and opposite Oudenard, which being considered as the only practicable passage for the allies, they spared no labour in preparing intrenchments, to withstand the most formidable attack.

It would have been almost impossible to force an enemy so fully prepared, without the loss of half the army; and, therefore, to lull his antagonists into security, Marlborough, as on other occasions, affected to pursue a design foreign to his real purpose. Reports were spread, that the allied troops were to be distributed into cantonments, till the siege of the citadel was finished; and that an attempt would then be made to effect a passage over the canal of Bruges, in the vicinity of Ghent. To give colour to these rumours, orders were issued for the conveyance of forage to Menin and Courtray; the field artillery was sent to Menin, and the proper officers employed to select quarters at Courtray for the commander-in-chief and his staff, and cantonments in the vicinity for the troops. So completely were appearances preserved, that the troops themselves were deceived; and both officers and men hourly expected the notice of a temporary repose from their labours.

After these preparatory measures, which were calculated at once to conceal and forward the real design, Marlborough broke up his camp on the 25th, and moved to Harlebeck, near Courtray. Here dispositions were made for forcing the passage of the Scheld on three points. In the morning of the 26th, a detachment of 16 battalions and 40 squadrons, under count Lottum, with a sufficient number of pontoons and artillery, were ordered to take the route of Gavre, to throw two bridges over the river, and, if they encountered no opposition, to march towards Eename. About the same time, Cadogan, with ten battalions and the

train of artillery, was sent forward to effect a similar passage near Kirkhoff. At seven in the evening, Marlborough began his march, in the same direction, with the rest of the main body, amounting to 30 battalions and 50 squadrons.

A reinforcement of five battalions and as many squadrons was also sent to the governor of Oudenard, who was enjoined to post them in the covert-way during the night, and, at the first discharge of artillery on the other points, to sally forth against the enemy, who were stationed opposite the town. Collaterally with these dispositions, Eugene had left with the prince of Wirtemberg a sufficient force to restrain the besieged in the citadel, and at the head of 20 battalions and 50 squadrons, directed his march through Roubaix, to force the passage from Hauterive to Escanaffe. It was settled between the different commanders, that if they respectively effected their purpose, they should so order their movements as to unite on the heights above Oudenard; or, if they encountered unexpected opposition, that they should turn to the place where the attempt was first successful.

The different columns reached their assigned points during the night and early next morning, expecting, as an eye-witness observes, "to engage in the bloodiest day they had ever yet experienced;" but such was the effect of the feints and false reports previously circulated, that they found the enemy totally unprepared, and unconscious of danger. A thick fog, rising from the river, contributed to conceal their operations to the last mo-

ment. Before the dawn, count Lottum laid his bridges near Gavre, without opposition, and advanced against the hostile corps which was posted in that quarter. Soon afterwards the detachment of Cadogan effected the passage at Kirkhoff, with the same good fortune, and the ten battalions were immediately posted in the meadows on the farther bank. A few squadrons of the enemy's horse catching the alarm, rode down as if to charge, but discovering the firm countenance, and prompt disposition of the confederates, wheeled about, and withdrew. Arrangements were then made for attacking the village of Berchem, where the hedges were lined with hostile infantry; but no sooner was the signal given for advancing, than the enemy made a hasty retreat.

At this moment the main body, led by Marlborough himself, drew near, and general Fagel and the prince of Hesse first passed the bridges at Kirkhoff, with the second line of infantry and part of the horse, and were rapidly followed by the remainder, who were impelled by the presence and exertions of the commander-in-chief. A pursuit instantly commenced after the hindmost squadrons of the enemy, who were overtaken and charged in a defile, but effected their escape to Tournay, with a trifling loss in men, and the greater part of their baggage. Eugene, in the interim, had reached Hauterive; but hearing that the passage was already effected at Kirkhoff, he directed his march thither, and crossed over the bridges laid by Cadogan.

The troops having thus overcome the principal

difficulty, moved towards the heights of Oudenard, where the chief force of the enemy was collected. Instead, however, of aiding the general dispositions, by a sudden sally, the governor of that fortress retained his troops quietly within the works, alleging in excuse, a counter-order from the dutch deputies. Thus the enemy were enabled to withdraw towards Grammont, with the loss of about twelve hundred men, who were taken or killed by the foremost of the allied squadrons. The pursuit being suspended, the different corps of the army united, and encamped towards evening on the high grounds overlooking the Scheld. *

This signal success, which was effected with so trifling a loss, was immediately announced to Godolphin, from Oudenard, where the general took up his quarters the night after the passage.

" *Oudenard, Nov.* 28. — The disagreeableness of the french having it in their power to see all our letters, has made me for some time not very regular in writing. But from henceforward I shall write very punctually, for yesterday morning we forced the Scheld, and beat the troops that were posted about this town. Prince Eugene is gone back this morning for Lille, and I am marching for the relief of Brussels, which, if it be not taken by to-morrow night, I do not doubt, with the blessing of God, the saving of it. After which, there is necessity of my getting more powder to

* The account of this operation is principally taken from a letter of captain Molesworth to his brother; he was an aide-de-camp of Marlborough, and accompanied Cadogan's detachment — From the Correspondence — Burnet — Lediard — Dumont — Vie du Prince Eugene — and the articles in the Gazette.

Lille, by which you may see that our campaign is not at an end, though my next letter must be dated in December, which is very unusual in this country.

"My lord Haversham may be angry, but prince Eugene and myself shall have that inward satisfaction of knowing that we have struggled with more difficulties, and have been blessed with more success, than ever was known before in one campaign. If at last it shall bring a safe and honourable peace to the queen, I shall esteem myself happy. When you see a proper time, you will assure her of my concern for the death of the prince. I have four of your letters to thank you for, but I am in such a hurry, with the many orders I am obliged to give, for this march to Brussels, that I have not time: but I cannot end this without telling you that I very much approve of Mr. Webb's being gratified with a government, but I do not think it for her majesty's service to give a promise before the vacancy happens, especially since he shall be made a lieut.-general this winter. I have for some days been so tormented with a sore throat, that if the time could permit it, my chamber were the properest place for me."

After the passage of the Scheld, Eugene returned to prosecute the siege of the citadel, and Marlborough, having stationed the main body of his troops at Omberg, proceeded with a strong detachment to Alost. Here he left part of his escort, and departed for Brussels, where he arrived on the 29th, a little before noon, as well to testify his satisfaction with the governor and garrison, for

their brave defence, as to take measures for continuing the supplies to the army at Lille. He was received with demonstrations of joy and gratitude, being met without the gates by the gallant governor and the officers of the garrison. After commending their courage and conduct, he repaired to the governor's house, where he was complimented by the council of state, the magistrates of the town, and the deputies of the States, who gratefully attributed their deliverance to his rapid and skilful march. He was accompanied on this occasion by the dethroned king Augustus, who had personally engaged in all the operations before Lille. From Brussels he again wrote to Godolphin.

"*Nov.* 29. — I gave you an account in mine of yesterday, of our having forced the passage of the Scheld. At my arrival last night at Alost, I had an account of the precipitate retreat of the elector of Bavaria. He began to draw off from the siege two hours after he had knowledge of my passage, fearing I might have fallen upon him, if he had staid for the carrying of his cannon and wounded men, the leaving of which is most scandalous; and consequently must be a great mortification to the elector. Lord Hertford having a mind to return for England, I send these letters by him, so that there needs be no present; but the opportunity being safe, I shall venture to tell you, that the forcing of the Scheld was not only necessary for the saving of Brabant, but also for the sending more ammunition to Lille. So that as soon as I have given the necessary orders in this town, I

shall return this evening to the army, to take such measures as may secure the passage of one thousand barrels of powder from Ath to Lille.

" I cannot prove what I am going to say, but I really believe we have been, from the very beginning of that siege, betrayed; for great part of our stores have been embezzled. * * * * * * God is most certainly with us, or it would have been impossible to overcome the many difficulties we have met with.

" You are so pressing in your letters for my return, that I must tell you the truth, and beg you will not think it vanity, that if I should leave the army, it would not be in any body's power to keep them in the field; so that you see the necessity. The truth is, that I am very ill in my health, so that if we should have very ill weather, it may kill me. But I must venture every thing, rather than quit, before we have perfected this campaign. My heart is in England, and nobody has greater desire for the enjoying quietness there than myself; but should I take ease at this time, I should hurt the queen and my country more than my whole life could repair."

After partaking of a splendid entertainment, given by the governor, Marlborough returned the same evening to Alost, where he received the glad tidings that the besiegers had effected a lodgment on the second counterscarp of the citadel. From his correspondence, we find that in the midst of these extraordinary exertions, he was labouring under one of those feverish attacks to which he was constitutionally subject. His tender solici-

tude on this occasion, to spare the feelings of the duchess, is no less conspicuous than that energy of character, which sustained him under bodily exertion, suffering, and debility.

To the Duchess.

"*Dec.* 3.—As my greatest happiness is in your tenderness, and that I do flatter myself with your having a tender concern for me, I have endeavoured all I could, not to let the army know the ill condition of my health for these three last weeks, fearing some officers might write it to England, by which you might be made uneasy. But I thank God I am now much better, and if I could have two or three days' quiet, I do not doubt but it would set me right, for my greatest uneasiness is a constant drought."

"*Dec.* 6.—I have received your dear letter of the 19th, by which I see the kind concern you had at that time for me, which I shall ever, by my kindness, endeavour to deserve. You will have known by lord Hertford, by this time, the success God has been pleased to bless us with: considering the pains they had taken, by fortifying every place of the river, where they thought we could pass, I think it next to a miracle, our surprising them as we did. Our passage has had all the happy effects we could propose, which has encouraged me to take measures for the siege of Ghent, though the season is so far advanced, that I tremble every day for fear of ill weather. If we take Ghent, I think we shall have a certainty of a good peace, which is every day more and more wished for by me."

From Alost, Marlborough again moved on the 1st of December, and encamped between Belleghem and Oudenard. General Dedem, with 20 battalions, here passed the Scheld, and posted himself beyond, while general Hompesch remained on the side of Menin, with a corps of 38 squadrons and eight battalions. The communications with Eugene were thus secured on every point, and avenues again opened for the passage of supplies.

During this interval, the approaches had been continued against the citadel, and the batteries were already preparing. The first care of Eugene, on returning to the spot, was to apprise Boufflers of the passage of the Scheld, and offer him the most honourable conditions. But the marshal was too sensible of the importance of retarding the allies, to accept the overture. The siege was accordingly prosecuted with new vigour. On the 1st of December, the salient angles of the second covert-way were carried; and before the 6th, the necessary lodgments and communications were made for raising breaching batteries on the counterscarp.

CHAPTER 74.

1708.

Reduction of the citadel of Lille.—Ulterior projects.—The french army distributed into winter quarters.—Investment and surrender of Ghent.—Evacuation of Bruges, Plassendael, and Leffinghen.—Correspondence.—Close of the campaign.—State of the war in Spain.—Proposals of the duke of Orleans to the allies.—Military operations in Italy.—Dispute and reconciliation between the emperor and the pope.—Transactions on the Rhine.—Dissatisfaction of the elector of Hanover.

While the british commander was anxiously expecting the surrender of the citadel, his active mind was employed in forming plans for the recovery of Bruges and Ghent. He was still also devising means for the farther prosecution of the war, and earnestly solicited his friends, both in England and Holland, to obtain such an augmentation of force, as would enable him to open the ensuing campaign at an early period, and with a decided superiority.

To Lord Godolphin.

"*Dec.* 3.—I agree with you that this campaign is already much longer than has been usual in this country; but you will remember that I have formerly told you, we must end this campaign with the re-taking of Ghent, if possible. The length of the siege of Lille puts us to great dif-

ficulties; for from henceforward, if we continue the army together, we must subsist them with dry forage, which is very difficult and expensive. This expense must be made by England and Holland; for even with that, we shall find it very difficult to persuade the foreign troops that it is reasonable, at this time of the year, to be from their winter quarters. But I think the taking of Ghent and Bruges, with the augmentation which I hope will be made by England and Holland, will procure an honourable and safe peace. I have proposed this expense to Holland by the last letters; and if they agree to it, I hope her majesty will approve of it.

"I acquainted you in a former letter, that I had ordered lieut.-general Erle to send five battalions to Antwerp, upon the first notice I had of the attempt on Brussels. I have now ordered him to leave at Ostend a brigadier with the six battalions, and himself, and the rest of the general officers, to return for England. I have also directed him to take as many officers as is possible, of those six regiments with him for England, so as to recruit them if possible, they being extremely weak.

"For the troops of augmentation, there must be early care taken with the king of Prussia and others, to let them see that there must be no advance money given; but that we shall be willing to pay such troops as are not already in the service. If there be not great care taken in this matter, my lord Raby, by his flattery to the king of Prussia and that court, will spoil all. The 50,000 odd crowns was last year promised so solemnly, that they must be paid as soon as he has signed the

treaty for this year; but I think it should stay for that. You know also, that the queen is engaged in honour to pay this winter the 200,000 crowns to the landgrave of Hesse. I know all these things must give you great trouble, but for God's sake let the queen's promises be kept sacred; for that will for ever establish her reputation, which is now very great.

"I cannot end this letter, without assuring you, that I know the difficulties of Holland to be so great, that I hope every honest man in England will be contented with their furnishing only one third in the augmentation; for it is most certain, that they now subsist only by credit, and that the ill-affected in that country have no hopes left, but that England will insist upon their giving one half.

"I have been troubled some time with the count Guiscard, which has given me the opportunity of being sure that his head is turned to impracticable projects; he has desired me to send you the inclosed paper, and at the same time tells me he has no money. You must let me know what I am to say to him. If you can make any use of him, he is better any where than in England. *

* In reply to his remarks on Guiscard, Godolphin observes, December 2. O.S. "I agree entirely in your character of him, and that he is better any where than here, as also that he wants money to carry him any where, though he had £500 when he went from hence, to carry him first to you, and afterwards, by your approbation, to the duke of Savoy, and to concert with him how he might be of most use to his operations next year, either by his intelligences in Dauphiné, or in the Cevennes, to both which he pretends. I can propose nothing better for him, than to follow his first intentions; and if, in order to it, you will direct Mr. Cardonel to help him with his credit at Amsterdam or

" I have this minute received a letter from prince Eugene, writ last night, that he hopes by Thursday to have all his batteries ready, and then he will summon the marshal, and at the same time let him know that he may send an officer to see our cannon and ammunition. After which, if he obliges us to make the breach, he must expect no other capitulation but that of being prisoners of war. The 1000 barrels of powder I send to Lille, are this morning come out of Ath, and will be with the prince on Wednesday night; so that on Thursday or Friday, I hope the french will be obliged to see or hear them. I think the last will be the better, for though there are not above 4000 men in the citadel, they consist of two regiments of horse, two of dragoons, and 22 of foot, so that there will be a great number of officers, and consequently an impossibility of raising the regiments for the next campaign. If we can be so happy to get every thing necessary for the attack of Ghent, I think to direct it, and the prince to cover the siege with the troops that shall march with him from Lille.

" God has blessed us for a long time with good weather, so that it would be ungrateful to complain; but this day we have rain with a southerly wind, which makes us fear we must expect much more."

" *Dec.* 6. — Since my last I have received yours

Brussels, with any sum not exceeding 4 or £500, I will see it repaid; and he must give Mr. Cardonel an account of his proceedings from time to time."

of the 19th, by which I see the letters from Holland had given you fears for Brussels and Antwerp. There was but too much reason for fears, for had not God favoured our passage of the Scheld, they must have been in danger; for not only the towns, but the people of this country hate the dutch. Our passage of the Scheld has so disordered M. de Vendome's projects, that I hope in God we shall succeed in this undertaking of Ghent, which is of the last consequence, not only for the finishing of this campaign, but also for the operations of the next. As it is impossible for me to stay her majesty's orders, without hurting the service very much, I have taken upon me, hoping the queen will approve it, to send this day major-general Cadogan to Brussels, in conjunction with the deputies of the States, to contract for the dry forage that must be delivered to the army during the siege of Ghent, the States having resolved to give it to those troops they pay. This extraordinary is absolutely necessary, so that I must beg you to lay it favourably before the queen and the lords of the cabinet; for should I have staid for orders, we might have lost the opportunity of making the siege, for both our horse and foot already suffer very much by the cold weather we now have.

" As we are assured by our letters from all parts, that the french draw all the troops in their power into this country, we have resolved to keep as many of the german troops as we can persuade to stay; so that I should wish you had sent, as I desired formerly, the two scottish regiments of foot;

and, if it be possible, I could wish they might be yet sent to Antwerp; for God knows when this campaign may end, and we have many of our regiments very weak; yet I think we must have Ghent and Bruges, let it cost what it will. Our men are very hearty, and desirous of taking those two towns; so that I hope they will suffer a great deal before they grumble. This country is not used to see an army so late in the field; but they all suffer patiently, believing it is what will forward the peace."

To the Duchess.

"*Dec.* 10. — I am now struggling with my own health and the season, that, if it be possible to finish the campaign with the taking of Ghent and Bruges; and, if God blesses us with success, I think we may, without vanity, say, that France will, with terror, remember this campaign for a long time, there never having been any in which there has been such a variety of action."

Both Marlborough and Eugene were particularly anxious to reduce Boufflers to an unconditional surrender; but the advance of the season, and the state of the fortress, induced them to relinquish this object, for the sake of ulterior advantages. The besieged having beat a parley on the 8th of December, at seven in the evening, were admitted to a capitulation on the 9th, and the same day, marching out with all the honours of war, were escorted to Douay. On this occasion, the confederate chiefs vied in the testimonies of their respect to the gallant defender of the place, who obtained not only the merited rewards of his own

sovereign, but the admiration of his conquerors. Thus ended a siege, which may be justly regarded as one of the most arduous and difficult, as well as one of the longest and most sanguinary, in modern warfare. The loss of the garrison amounted to 8000 men, and that of the besiegers, in killed, wounded, and sick, or incapable, to no less than 14,000.

To Lord Godolphin.

"*Dec.* 10.—I am very glad to tell you, that prince Eugene sent col. Cronstrom to me yesterday, to let me know that he was to have possession of one of the gates of the citadel that day. I have taken measures with him for their sending 20 battalions and 30 squadrons to join me, with all expedition, so that I might give as little time as possible to those in Ghent to strengthen themselves, which they now do, by working day and night. You will see by the inclosed letter, which we have intercepted, the number of troops the enemy have for the defence of Ghent and Bruges, which are so numerous, that I am afraid they will be able to give us more trouble than were to be wished at this season; but the consequences of taking these places are so great, that we must venture every thing for the being masters of them. I never, in my life, felt colder weather than we have had for these last three days, so that our men and horses must suffer. I shall march to-morrow, so that my next march will be for investing the town, which will be as soon as I shall be able to have the cannon at Dendermond. I hope my next will acquaint you with the day. If God bless us with the taking of

this place, and a good augmentation be made, I think a good peace must follow before the middle of next summer."

The french monarch was discouraged by the failure of all his projects for the relief of the citadel of Lille. Calculating that the surrender of that fortress would close the campaign, and that the allied commanders would not expose an army, reduced by past exertions, to new hardships at the commencement of winter, he ordered his generals to strengthen the garrisons of Ghent and Bruges, and distribute their troops into quarters, in opposition to the remonstrances of Vendome, who was anxious to retrieve the disgrace which he had encountered in the course of the campaign.* When, however, the movements of the confederates indicated the prosecution of farther operations, count de la Motte, who was charged with the defence of Ghent, was enjoined to maintain his post to the last extremity, and earnestly exhorted to imitate the gallant example of Boufflers.

Measures were, however, already adopted by the two chiefs, to abridge the time, and lessen the means of resistance. On the 11th of December, Marlborough quitted Berleghem, and encamped with the right at Melle, and the left at Merlebeck; and gave orders for laying bridges over the Upper and Lower Scheld, as well as over the Lys, for maintaining his communications. On the 16th, Eugene passed the Scheld, and halting his army at Eename, proceeded to

* Memoires de Berwick, t. ii. p. 55.

Melle, where he held a conference with his colleague. The requisite arrangements being settled by a council of war, it was decided that Marlborough should direct the siege, and Eugene head the covering army. In pursuance of this resolution, a detachment was sent, on the 17th, from each army, one to take post at Gamarage, and observe the motions of the enemy beyond the Dender, the other to Osterzelle, to straiten Ghent, between the Upper and Lower Scheld. The ensuing day, the troops of Marlborough making a general movement in four columns, invested the place on all sides: count Lottum between the Upper Scheld and the Lys; the prince of Hesse between the Lys and the canal of Sas; the duke of Wirtemberg between the canal of Sas and the Lower Scheld; and count Tilly, to the south, between the Upper and Lower Scheld. Marlborough himself took up his quarters at Merlebeck, as the most convenient point to superintend the attack.

On the 24th the trenches were opened by count Lottum, and no other resistance being encountered, except a single sally, the batteries were speedily in a condition to bombard the town. On the 30th, therefore, count de la Motte sent out a trumpet, to demand an honourable capitulation, which Marlborough granted, from an anxiety to spare his troops, as the frost had already commenced. The incidents of this enterprise will sufficiently appear in the correspondence.

To Lord Godolphin.

" *Dec.* 13. — The wind having been for some time in the east, we have had no letters from Eng-

land. Till this frost breaks, we can neither break ground for our batteries, nor open our trenches; and which is yet worse, if this weather continues, all the canals will be frozen, so that we shall not be able to get forage from Holland, which is the only place that can furnish us. But my reliance is, that God, who has protected and blessed us hitherto, will enable us to finish it with the taking this town, which you will be sensible of the use it will be to us, when you read the inclosed letter. We begin to give dry forage to-morrow: we have contracted for as much as will serve us for three weeks, but after that time, the towns of this country, as well as the army, will, I am afraid, find no forage but what must be brought from Holland."

"*Dec.* 17. — I am to return you my thanks for yours of the 23d and 26th, and I do, with all my heart, rejoice at what you write, that you believe every thing will go well in parliament. I pray God we may succeed in this necessary undertaking. The enemy knowing the consequence of our having Ghent, have left 30 battalions and 19 squadrons for the defence of it, which in other countries would be thought a good army. Their numerous garrison, and the season of the year, have made them flatter themselves hitherto. But now they begin to see our ammunition boats, so that I had this evening a deputation from the town, to desire that their houses might not be burnt. You will see my answer in the paper which goes to the secretary's office, it being too long to trouble you with in this letter. To-morrow the town will

be invested on all sides. After which, we must for some time have patience, till we get our cannon. By the next post I intend to let Mr. Walpole know what number of men we shall want for the twenty english battalions of this army. Those with Mr. Erle are in a much worse condition. He must let you know the numbers. Those in Spain and Portugal should also be taken care of."

"*Dec.* 20. — I hope by this time the house of commons are come to a resolution for an augmentation, so that there may be time for the getting of the men. Besides the advantage it will be, that our friends as well as enemies may see that the war next year is to be carried on with vigour. I am earnest in this, because I think it will make an end of the war.

"The thaw continuing, the enemy now make use of the advantage of their sluices on the Scheld and Lys, by overflowing all they can; so that we are forced to make new ways for carrying of our cannon, which I hope we shall begin to do in three days, all diligence being used for the landing of them."

"*Dec.* 24. — The inclosed is a copy of a letter writ by M. Chamillard to the count de la * Motte. It should not be seen by many, for fear the french should hear of my having a copy. You will see by it, that he is not to manage his garrison, which, by a certain account we have from the town, consists of 34 battalions and 19 squadrons. However, I have no doubt of God's blessing us with success,

* Printed in Lediard, vol. ii. p. 405.

though it may last something longer than we first proposed to ourselves. At this time we have very fair weather, which we make use of for hutting and covering ourselves, so that we may resist ill weather if we must have it; for the soldiers as well as officers are convinced of the necessity of having this town. Prince Eugene is returned from Brussels, and is desirous to be going for Vienna, where he says his presence is necessary for putting the troops in a condition for the next campaign; but as he is also desirous of my going to the Hague with him for two or three days, he must stay till this siege is over, or not go to the Hague. What you say as to the prohibition of letters is certainly very right, but the States will never consent to it. We shall open the trenches before the town this night, and before the castle to-morrow."

"*Dec. 27.*—I have received the favour of yours of the 7th. Our frost left us about the same time yours did, and ever since we have had very fine weather, except yesterday and the day before, in which two days we had so great a fog, that we could not see ten yards before us; so that we could not see, till yesterday in the evening, where to place our batteries. We are now working so diligently, that I hope our cannon will fire on Sunday morning at farthest. In one of the sallies the french made yesterday, they carried into the town brigadier Evans and col. Groves, the latter dangerously wounded. They were so soon beaten back, that we did not lose above 30 men, which were all of lord North's regiment.

"You will see by the letter I have received from the States, which I have sent to Mr. secretary Boyle, that they are desirous I should stay here till the beginning of the winter, in hopes the emperor will consent to send prince Eugene in the beginning of March. I have told the prince that, provided the queen allows of it, I will take care of the months of January and February, and that he must take care of March and April, which he is willing to do. I am sure all the troops cannot be in their quarters till the beginning of February, so that this will not keep me above three weeks longer abroad, than naturally I must have been. But if the queen will have it otherwise, I will not stay one day, which I desire you will assure her.

"This fog, and my feet being wet every day in the trenches, has given me so great a cold and sore throat, that it is very uneasy to me to hold down my head, so that you will excuse my not answering yours till next post."

The surrender of Ghent produced an interesting spectacle. On the 2d of January, the garrison evacuated the place with the usual honours of war, and were received, as they filed off, by Marlborough and Eugene, surrounded by their officers and soldiers. The march began early in the morning, headed by the commander and his suite; and the cavalcade was so numerous, that the procession was not concluded till seven in the evening. After attending this ceremony, Marlborough supped with his colleague, enjoying the happy termination of their fatigues, and in the evening visited the town *incognito*. On the following morning he

examined the fortifications and trenches, and on his return was met at the gate of St. Leven by the magistrates, who, according to custom, presented him with the keys of the town in a gilt ewer. Returning the keys with a gracious compliment, he was conducted through lines of burghers, under arms, to the town-house, where he partook of a splendid entertainment. In the evening, the tower of the town-house was illuminated; and, as if to make amends for their former defection, all ranks testified, by loud acclamations, their joy on returning to their obedience under the austrian sovereign.

The satisfaction which Marlborough felt on this occasion, was augmented by new success. The magistrates of Bruges arrived on the 2d, to announce the evacuation of their town by the enemy, and to offer their submission. At the same time, intelligence was received, that on the capitulation of Ghent, the garrisons of Plassendael and Leffinghen had followed the example of Bruges, and retired into the french territory. Thus the enemy abandoned all the conquests which they had made during the course of the campaign.

The two generals having arranged the plan of winter-quarters, and left the command to count Tilly, proceeded through Brussels to the Hague, where they arrived in the beginning of January.

To Lord Godolphin.

" *Dec.* 31.—I sent yesterday an express by Ostend, to acquaint her majesty that the troops of Ghent were to march out on Wednesday, if not relieved before. This place will secure the con-

quest of Lille, and give us great advantages for the next campaign. The dutch thinking it for the service, as really it is, to keep the emperor's troops in this country, have assured the prince of Savoy that they will be willing to give their part for enabling them to subsist. I beg her majesty will approve of my assuring, that whatever the dutch will allow, England may do the same; for should these troops return for Germany, we should not have them till the month of July, at soonest. I have this morning sent a trumpet with letters to the governor and town of Bruges, offering them the same capitulation as given to Ghent; but if they give me the trouble of marching with the army, they must not expect it. I am afraid that I shall have the return of a civil answer, and the trouble of marching, which I shall give you an account of by my next. * * * * * *

"The prince of Savoy bids me assure you, that every thing possible will be done to finish the dispute with the pope."

"*Ghent, January* 3. 1708–9.—I was yesterday, from ten in the morning till six at night, seeing the garrison of Ghent and all that belonged to them march by me. It is astonishing to see so great numbers of good men, to look on, and suffer a place of this consequence to be taken, at this season, with so little a loss. As soon as they knew I had possession of the gate of this town, they took the resolution of abandoning Bruges. This campaign is now ended to my own heart's desire; and as the hand of the Almighty is visible in this whole matter, I hope her majesty will think it due

to him, to return public thanks; and, at the same time, to implore his blessing on the next campaign. I cannot express enough to you the importance of these two towns, for without them we could neither be quiet in our winter-quarters, nor open with advantage the next campaign.

"I shall to-morrow give the necessary orders for separating the army, so that in two days they will be all on their march for their winter-quarters. I must go with prince Eugene for some few days to the Hague, after which, I shall take a little care of my health.

"I desire you will give my humble duty to her majesty, and assure her that I do, with all my heart, pray that the Almighty God may bless her arms the next campaign, as visibly as he has been pleased to do in this."

Thus terminated this extraordinary campaign, perhaps one of the most scientific occurring in the annals of military history. From the commencement to the close, the confederates had to struggle against a force *superior in numbers;* to attack an army posted in a position considered as impregnable; to besiege a place of the first magnitude, at the very moment when they were themselves in a manner invested; to open and maintain their communications in spite of innumerable obstacles, both of nature and art; finally, to reduce, in the depth of winter, two fortresses defended by garrisons, which, in other circumstances, would have been considered as forming an army of no common magnitude. Nor can we omit paying a due tribute of approbation to the merits of Vendome, whose

firmness, perseverance, and spirit, rendered him a rival worthy of his great antagonists; whose skill and resources, though thwarted by his prince and colleagues, alone saved the french monarchy from that degradation which seemed the natural and inevitable consequence of the defeat at Oudenard.

The stupendous events in the Netherlands having diverted our attention from objects of less importance, we shall now take a brief retrospect of the military operations in other quarters.

Spain, the principal object of the war, first claims our notice. By repeated and urgent remonstrances, Marlborough had at length induced the emperor to send to the support of his brother 7300 men, who, in the commencement of the year, landed at Barcelona. But notwithstanding this succour, the disastrous events of the battle of Almanza were still deeply felt. The army in Catalonia was weak and discouraged, without money, magazines, or clothes, and instead of offensive operations, was scarcely competent to defend the frontier. The same jealousies and disputes still reigned, and lord Galway unwillingly resumed his irksome post; but his presence produced a continual cause of irritation in the mind of the king and ministers. The death of count Noyelles, commander of the austrian forces, which happened in April, increased, instead of diminishing the existing difficulties; for the influence which he possessed over the mind of the king, though often injuriously exerted, had yet preserved some consistency in the military operations. Particular jealousy was also shewn of the portuguese troops, who were considered as an

incumbrance to the country, without contributing to the defence. The most pressing instances were accordingly made for the departure of count Staremberg and the austrian troops, who were yet to be detached from Italy; and the command held by Noyelles was transferred to count Uhlfeld, an officer without military talents, and whose chief merit was a conciliating and docile temper.

To remove one of the many sources of contention which had so long existed, a british squadron was sent to convey the portuguese troops to their native country, and they were accompanied by Galway, who eagerly seized the first opportunity to withdraw from his obnoxious post. At Lisbon they were strengthened by supplies and recruits from England, and sent to the frontier to divert the attention of the enemy. But the same jealousies which had been manifested against Galway in Spain, were displayed in the portuguese court; and after a long contention, he was excluded from the supreme command. Even his colleague, Das Minas, was discarded, as a general of too enterprising a character, and the direction of the army was consigned to the marquis of Fronteira, who was not likely to overpass the limited views and orders of his court. Galway, who still remained at the head of the british troops, was invested with the character of ambassador; but all the interest of his own government could not secure to him any predominant influence in the direction of military affairs.

At length Staremberg arrived at Barcelona, and the command of the british and dutch troops

in Spain was transferred to general Stanhope and count Belcastel, who were both invested with the character of ambassador from their respective governments. The troops were drawn from their quarters, and camps were formed on the road to Cervera and Lerida. But they were too weak and ill-provided to undertake any movement of importance; and, at the latter end of June, the bourbon chiefs invested, without obstruction, the important fortress of Tortosa. Although this place was the key of Catalonia on the side of Valencia, the fortifications had been left in an imperfect and dilapidated state, and the garrison, consisting of palatines, were disaffected, and little disposed to make a vigorous resistance.

Sir John Leak having reached Barcelona with the fleet which had conveyed the succours to Lisbon, a council of war was held by the military and naval chiefs; but their deliberations merely served to exhibit their perilous situation. The only hope of relieving Tortosa rested on the speedy arrival of further austrian reinforcements, which had been so long promised, and so long delayed, and the admiral proceeded to Italy to transport them to the scene of action. He was at the same time commissioned to convey the princess Elizabeth Christina of Brunswick Blackenburg, who was destined to share the tottering throne of the austrian prince. He returned with 8000 men; but the time which had been wasted in delays and deliberations, rendered this succour of no other avail, than to avert the fate of Catalonia; for the governor of Tortosa had surrendered the place

after a faint defence of a month, and part only of the garrison joined the confederate troops, who were now assembled in the camp of Constantine, the rest having deserted to the bourbon standard. Staremberg took post at Cervera, and prevented a design which had been formed by the bourbon commanders, to unite the two armies in Roussillon and Aragon; but in accomplishing this object, he was obliged to sacrifice Denia, which was reduced by the chevalier d'Asfeld, in November, and to witness the investment of Alicante, the only remnant of the austrian conquests in Valencia. These losses were in some degree compensated by the reduction of Minorca and Sardinia. The first was accomplished by the incredible exertions and consummate skill of general Stanhope; the latter effected by the count of Cifuentes, recently created marquis of Almonzel, who sailed with a small force and obtained possession of Sardinia, with the assistance of the natives.

In the course of this campaign a singular incident demands our attention. The capital of Spain had been agitated by the same feuds and jealousies as the rival court of Barcelona. Philip was governed by his young and spirited queen, and she in her turn swayed by the celebrated princess Orsini, who had been selected to direct the inexperience of both.* This aspiring woman was involved in perpetual contentions with the duke of Orleans, who commanded the army, as well as with the castilian nobles; and numerous intrigues

* Memoirs of the Bourbon Kings of Spain, chap. 15.

and counter-plots existed, not only between the two bourbon courts, but between the courtiers of both nations.

The partial successes of the campaign, on the side of Catalonia, could not counterbalance the embarrassment arising from these contentions; and Louis, like the allies, found the peninsula a constant drain for those resources which his misfortunes in the Netherlands rendered necessary in other quarters. Deeming the cause of his grandson hopeless, he suggested, or connived at a design, formed by the duke of Orleans, to succeed Philip in the throne of Spain, or at least to secure a part of the peninsula, by a private accommodation with the allies. Towards the close of the campaign, the duke availed himself of a former intimacy between his dependant, Dubois, and general Stanhope, to offer his assistance in reducing Spain, provided the allies would accede to a partition of the country, and allow him to retain Navarre and some of the northern districts with the title of king. The communications being transmitted to the british government, it was deemed a favourable opportunity to hasten the humiliation of Louis; and the general was authorised, by instructions from the secretary of state, to offer the french prince, with the assent of Charles, which was previously obtained, the possession of Navarre, and the assistance of the allies in annexing to that territory Languedoc, with such of the southern provinces of France as their united forces could subdue. Not only Stanhope, but the british cabinet appear to have been captivated by the

disclosure of this plausible scheme, and great hopes were entertained of drawing considerable advantage from the defection of the duke of Orleans, who was beloved by his army. But Marlborough viewed the negotiation with less sanguine eyes, and considered the attempt as made by the connivance of Louis, to create dissensions with the courts of Barcelona and Vienna. He observes in a letter to Godolphin: —

"*Hague, Jan.* 23. — I send over by this opportunity an officer that is sent express from Mr. Stanhope. His letter to lord Sunderland will inform you as to what has passed with the duke of Orleans. He desires my opinion, which I am fearful of giving, in a matter of this consequence. But I really believe the duke of Orleans would not act this part, but that he has the king of France's permission."

To General Stanhope.

"*Jan.* 26. — I read and forwarded your letter to the earl of Sunderland, and do entirely agree with your sentiments in that matter. I am persuaded the duke of Orleans could never venture so far without direction from court, the rather, for that by what I have heard from other parts, the king of France begins to despair of being able to keep his grandson on the throne. However, it is a matter of such consequence, that I dare give no opinion of my own in it; but I hope you will soon be instructed from England how far you may proceed."

The event justified his sagacity; for the design being either purposely or accidentally disclosed to

the court of Madrid, the clandestine intercourse was suspended, and Louis himself interfered to soothe the resentment which Philip conceived at what he considered as an insidious attempt to deprive him of his crown.*

In Italy the event of the campaign was far from corresponding with the heavy charges incurred by the allies, and the expectations conceived from the prowess and spirit of Victor Amadeus, duke of Savoy. Satisfied with having recovered his dominions, he was principally anxious for his own security and personal aggrandizement, and seized every opportunity to start objections against any distant or offensive enterprise. At the opening of the spring, he refused to act, till the court of Vienna had conferred on him the investiture of part of the Montferrat, which had been promised him by the treaty of 1703; and when the influence of Marlborough had procured the accomplishment of his wishes, he availed himself of the tardiness of the german reinforcements, to invent new pretexts for delay.

At length the arrival of the austrian general, Daun, with a considerable corps of troops, left him no farther excuse; and he yielded to the importunities of the british court in taking the field. With a force of 35,000 men he scaled Mont Cenis and the Little St. Bernard, as if with a design to

* Letter from general Stanhope to the earl of Sunderland, Nov. 11. 1708 — Memoirs of the bourbon kings of Spain, ch. 16. — Memoires de St. Simon, who has given an interesting account of the conversations which passed between Louis and the duke of Orleans on this mysterious subject, t. v. p. 11. — Instructions from lord Sunderland to general Stanhope, Dec. 10.

penetrate into Savoy. Having by this manœuvre drawn the attention of his antagonist, marshal Villars, to the side of Fort Barreaux, he suddenly invested the small forts of Exilles and Perusa. Villars could not arrive in time to obstruct his operations, and the fall of these places, which held out only a few days, was followed by the investment of the more important fortress of Fenestrelles, where the French had erected a strong citadel after the destruction of Pignerol. The siege of this place detained him till the end of August, when the fall of the autumnal snows precluded all farther operations. Both parties then retired to their quarters, and the only fruit of the campaign was the possession of the passes leading across the Alps, which was not likely to produce any other advantage, than an additional security to Piémont. This irruption also incidentally caused a diversion in favour of the allies in Spain, by obliging the french to reduce their army in Roussillon, for the purpose of strengthening that in Dauphiné, under marshal Villars.

Another contention contributed to weaken the army in Italy, and to disappoint the hopes conceived of the operations in that quarter. From the commencement of the contest for the spanish succession, Clement the eleventh, the reigning pope, had manifested a decided partiality towards the bourbon cause, and consequently equal hostility towards that of Austria. This conduct led to jealousies and irritation on both sides, until Clement publicly provoked the emperor, by excommunicating the germans for exacting contributions

in the duchy of Parma. Joseph repelling this insult by asserting his sovereign rights over all the cities of Italy, the pope was urged, by the instigation and promises of the french, to recur to temporal arms in aid of his spiritual pretensions. He raised troops, opened the treasures of St. Angelo, made preparations for war, and endeavoured to form a new holy league among the states of Italy. But his impotent resentment was soon foiled. The emperor was not of a temper to be alarmed by the thunders of the Vatican; and the german troops had no sooner recrossed the Alps into Piémont, than marshal Daun marched with a corps towards the ecclesiastical state. The hasty levies of the church were speedily dissipated, Comacchio was captured, Ferrara besieged, and Bologna threatened, while a corps of austrians from Naples advanced to menace the opposite frontier, and the combined fleet, which had recently subjugated Minorca, blockaded the principal ports of the ecclesiastical state. During these contentions, Marlborough laboured to prevent a war, which was likely to spread through Italy, and divert the attention and efforts of the allies from the french frontier. In his correspondence with the austrian ministers, we find him labouring to extenuate the conduct of the pope, and soothe the resentment of the emperor. He had at length the satisfaction to succeed in mediating an accommodation, though he could not restore cordiality. The emperor accepted an apology, and the pope agreed to refer the existing disputes to arbitration, to give Charles the title of king, to reduce his force 5000 men, to

grant the imperialists quarters, and a free passage through his territories, and to leave Comacchio in the possession of an imperial garrison, till all arrangements were completed.

From our narrative of military operations in the Netherlands at the commencement of the campaign, the reader will doubtless have anticipated a series of bickerings with the elector of Hanover. A prince who was ambitious of military fame, and who valued himself on his splendid prospects and personal influence, must have possessed an unusual portion of generosity and moderation, to witness, without displeasure, glories in which he was not permitted to share. He could not so far repress his feelings, as to appreciate the necessity of that profound silence which Marlborough and Eugene had maintained on the intended junction of their two armies; and, therefore, he resented their prudent reserve as unjust and disrespectful towards himself. This feeling operated with double force, when he compared his own limited sphere of action with the brilliant career, which the two generals, whom he regarded as foreigners, had opened in a quarter more exposed to observation; and every success which marked their progress, contributed to aggravate his disappointment and sharpen his chagrin. His discontent was increased by the jealousies which prevailed between the courts of England and Hanover, and particularly by the lukewarmness, which the resentment of Anne obliged her ministers to maintain towards his family. These feelings were inflamed by the insinuations of the party agents, who were privately deputed to Ha-

nover, to increase the odium fostered against the general and the treasurer. Hence, though at the head of an army amounting to 30,000 men, and superior to that of the enemy, the elector sullenly refused to act offensively; and coldly looked on, while detachment after detachment was drawn from the Rhine, to swell the french force in the Netherlands. Hence the campaign in Germany was distinguished by no event of importance; and after wasting the season in mere camp details, the elector quitted the scene of action, with the same sullenness and discontent which he had manifested at the commencement and during its progress.

The indications of displeasure which escaped from the elector, were described by Mr. Howe, who attended him as british agent, in mysterious, and often exaggerated terms, and made a deep impression on the sensitive mind of the british commander. In transmitting one of these accounts to Godolphin, he observes: —

" Mr. Cardonel having shewn me Mr. Howe's letter, I could not omit sending it to you; but I should think it should be communicated only to the queen; for if Mr. Howe be not mistaken, their behaviour is very extraordinary, and very wrong, I think, for their own interest. But passion is very capable of making men blind."

On the other hand, Godolphin laboured to soothe the dissatisfaction of his friend, by arguments, which do credit to his moderation and sound sense.

" *Sept.* 29.–*Oct.* 10. — As to the elector of Hanover, I agree that what you say of his conduct is

certainly true, and yet I am of opinion, that Mr. Freeman should endeavour to manage him, if possibly he can; for I can plainly see, by what lord Sunderland throws out upon some occasions, and also by other ways, that the elector's ill-humour and uneasiness is fomented from hence by some of both sides; and he is told that he has been very ill used by you as well as by prince Eugene, in not leaving him a *stock* * sufficient to carry on the trade in those parts to advantage. Now, though nothing of this be really true, yet we must allow a little for impressions, which people here are inclined to believe, whether they be true or not true. My only fear is, that people may take a handle from hence to do ill offices to you in England."

"*Dec.* 6.–17. — As to the letter you send me from Mr. Howe, I think it is so little fit to be shewn to any body, that I am not inclined to shew it even to the queen, who is but too apt to take prejudices to that court; and I doubt Mr. Howe is so too."

* An equivocal expression adopted to signify an army, in order to conceal the cypher more effectually.

CHAPTER 75.

1709.

Renewal of the struggle for the promotion of Somers. — Hostile threats of the whigs. — Accusation against admiral Churchill. — Threatened censure of the prince of Denmark. — The queen professes her acquiescence in their demands. — Death of the prince. — Somers appointed president of the council, Wharton lord lieutenant of Ireland, and lord Pembroke high admiral. — Minor arrangements in favour of the whigs. — Temporary renewal of the intercourse between the queen and the duchess.

During the stay of the british general in the camp of Rousselaer, he was visited by Mr. Craggs, who was deputed on the part of Godolphin and the whigs, to describe the state of political affairs in England, and to propose those arrangements, which could not be accomplished by a less direct communication. From the period of his departure, the letters of Marlborough contain less reference to domestic transactions, either because the vigilance of the enemy obstructed his epistolary intercourse, or because a definitive plan of conduct was already concerted. On his return, however, to the Hague, his correspondence with his friends in England resumed its usual character and interest.

Notwithstanding the communications conveyed through the channel of Mr. Craggs, the former difficulties recurred with double force. The im-

patience of the whigs increased at the obstacles which obstructed their admission to power, and they even turned their resentment against the two ministers, who had so long and fruitlessly endeavoured to promote their cause. Lord Somers, laying aside his natural reserve, peevishly complained to Swift, in a casual visit, of the ingratitude which his party had experienced from those two noble persons, adding, "after the service which I and my friends have performed in promoting the Union, they will hardly treat me with common civility." * When these querulous complaints fell from a nobleman of such caution and sedateness, what could be expected from the impetuous temper of Sunderland? In a letter to Somers, after inveighing against the conduct of Marlborough and Godolphin, and asserting that they were not capable of doing any right thing with a good grace, he recommends extorting their acquiescence, adding, "if it continues to be pressed by all of us, they must and will do it at last. If these instances should prove fruitless, when the proper time is come, which I think is just before the meeting of parliament, let us take our leave of them, by quitting, and have nothing more to do with them." †

Soon afterwards, therefore, Sunderland, in the name of the leading members of the party, again announced to the duchess a distinct and decided resolution, to withhold their support from govern-

* Swift's Change of Ministers, p. 14.

† Hardwicke State Papers, vol. ii. p. 479.

ment, unless their demand was granted; a commission which the duchess did not hesitate to execute, and support with her customary zeal.

Nor were the duke and Godolphin the only objects of their invective. Not only Sunderland and Halifax, but even Somers ascribed their repeated disappointments to a want of zeal in the duchess herself; and we find them occasionally receiving the representations and excuses of her agent, Mr. Maynwaring, with a degree of sullenness bordering on incredulity. Besides their disappointment at the delay respecting the promotion of Somers, other causes, though of minor consideration, contributed to inflame their resentment. These were, the difficulties which still obstructed the arrangement for the offices of attorney and solicitor general, and speaker.

They did not, therefore, hesitate in carrying their hostile denunciations into effect. After recurring to the invitation of the electoral prince, and every other irritating topic, they decided on resuming their attack against the admiralty, which they well knew would sensibly affect the feelings of the queen for her husband, and of the duke of Marlborough for his brother. The imprudent conduct of the prince of Denmark, and of his adviser, admiral Churchill, unfortunately furnished a plausible pretext for their determination.

The prince not only fomented the partiality of the queen to the tories, but expressed a personal antipathy to Somers. When he found the whig interest too powerful to be combated, he secretly encouraged the duke of Somerset in his attempts

to divide them, and through his agency, endeavoured to lure lord Wharton, by holding forth hopes that the queen would admit him, or any of the party into power, provided she could be spared the mortification of receiving into her service a nobleman who had shewn so little consideration for himself. Wharton contemptuously rejected this indiscreet proposal, and by his communication of the overture, increased the resentment of the other chiefs.*

The conduct of admiral Churchill himself aggravated the discontents of the party; for the more zealously he was supported by the queen and prince, the more he appears to have exerted his influence to the prejudice of the whigs, in spite of his brother's incessant remonstrances. By the effects of this mutual irritation, his removal from office became a matter of state, and the whigs prepared to expel him, as a step preparatory to a direct attack against the prince. In this cabal, the duchess, as usual, took an active part. We find her not only importuning her husband with incessant complaints, but addressing a letter to the queen, full of bitter invectives, and declaring that all the brilliant services of the duke could not shield his brother against the clamours of the nation. Her violent language made as little impression on this, as on other occasions; and admiral Churchill was attacked on one side, and defended on the other, with equal resolution and perseverance. At

* This conversation is detailed in a letter from Mr. Maynwaring to the duchess.

length Godolphin not only found it necessary to gratify the whigs, but himself became sensible that the only resource which remained, was, to remove the obnoxious favourite from his situation. His unbiassed opinion weighed with the duke, and we find the copy of a letter to his brother, indicating the warmth with which he entered into the feelings of the duchess and Godolphin.

"*Oct.* 19. 1708.—Finding you still continue in the prince's council, and the parliament now so near, I cannot be so wanting, either to you or to myself, as not to tell you plainly, with all the kindness of a brother, and the sincerity of a friend, that if you do not take an unalterable resolution of laying down that employment before the parliament sits, you will certainly do the greatest disservice imaginable to the queen and prince, the greatest prejudice to me, and bring yourself into such inconveniences as may last as long as you live, and from which it is wholly impossible to protect you. Whereas, on the other side, if the considerations of making the queen's affairs more easy next session, of avoiding a great deal of trouble and disagreeableness to the prince, and of real danger to yourself, as well as prejudice to me, prevail with you to comply with my earnest desire in this thing, I think I could be answerable to you, that you could not fail of finding your advantage in it, doubly to what you do now, both in profit and quiet. These motives being all of them as strong as it is possible for me to suggest, I hope you will give me the satisfaction of letting me know very soon, that my mind may be at ease in this matter,

and that you have virtually laid down before my coming over."

This was doubtless a serious sacrifice on the part of the duke, and both the treasurer and the duchess hoped that the resignation of the admiral would restore cordiality. It appears, however, that the whig lords were so incensed against the prince, and so determined to force themselves into power, that they would not be satisfied with the resignation or dismission of his obnoxious favourite, though it had hitherto seemed to be their principal object. Their pertinacity was strengthened by a wish to have the management of the admiralty transferred to lord Pembroke, that his two posts, the presidency of the council, and the vice-royalty of Ireland, might be vacated for Somers and Wharton. In vain the lord treasurer endeavoured to soothe their resentment, and persuade them to content themselves with the dismission of the admiral, by offering to propose * a law for rendering the council responsible. In this resolution they appeared immoveable, and were supported by Newcastle, Devonshire, Townshend, and some of the more moderate of the party. It was evident, indeed, that no compromise could be effected, and that the prince himself would be sacrificed, unless lord Somers was admitted into office.

The danger which menaced a person so dear, operated powerfully on the feelings of the queen, who seeing no other resource to screen her husband from an attack, notified to lord Godol-

* Mr. Maynwaring to the duchess.

phin a reluctant, but unqualified acquiescence in the demands of the whigs, as we learn from one of his letters.

" *St. James's, Oct. 22.–Nov. 2.* — The queen is at last brought to allow me to make such condescensions, which, if done in time, would have been sufficient to have eased most of our difficulties; and would yet do it, in great measure, if the whigs will be but tolerably reasonable; and I am really of opinion, that if you were in England at this moment but 48 hours, all might yet go well, I mean as to the public."

Even after this solemn promise, however, the queen suspended her decision, as well from her prejudices, as from the indisposition of her husband, who had long been sinking under a mortal disorder. An interval of some days elapsed, which was marked with the utmost anxiety, till the long-expected dissolution superseded all other considerations. The treasurer felt the peril of the crisis, and in the most pressing terms urged Marlborough to hasten his return to England.

" *Oct. 29.* — My last will have prepared you in some measure not to be surprised with the news of the prince's death, which happened yesterday, about two in the afternoon. Nature was quite worn out in him, and no art could support him long.

" The queen's affliction, and the difficulty of speaking with that freedom and plainness to her, which her service requires, while she has so tender a concern upon her, is a new additional inconvenience, which our circumstances did not need, and

will make it more necessary than ever, that you should not delay your return to England; for I really foresee, that unless that can be compassed very, very soon, it will be next to impossible to prevent ruin. I should not write so pressingly upon this head, if I were not entirely convinced of the necessity of it; and I cannot mingle any thing else in the present letter, because I think nothing else that I can say, is of half so much consequence."

This melancholy event, however, finally removed all difficulties, and silenced all objections. Admiral Churchill lost his office and influence, by the dissolution of the board, and the death of his patron. Lord Pembroke was nominated lord high admiral, the vice-royalty of Ireland was transferred to lord Wharton, and the place of president of the council, so long the subject of contention, was conferred on lord Somers, who candidly acknowledged his obligations in a letter to the duke of Marlborough.

"*Nov.* 30. — My lord; Be pleased to allow me the honour to congratulate your grace upon the good news which the earl of Hertford brought us. We heard of it before from Ostend, but we could not be so sure of the truth of such a success, as the importance of it to the common cause required to put us at ease, till an express arrived from your grace. This campaign seems to have been as long and as full of difficulties as any one reads of in history; and by what has been already done, and what your grace gives hopes we may hear before the end of it, is like to prove as glorious, and, by

the blessing of God, as productive of great events, as ever was known. It gives a near prospect of a safe and honourable peace to Europe, and to your grace no remote view of some rest, after the fatigues and dangers of so many glorious campaigns.

" I do not pretend to acquaint your grace with the honour the queen has been pleased to do me, in admitting me into her service, but rather to return my humble thanks to you on that account, since I am well assured, without your grace's concurrence, nothing of that nature had been done. I hope your grace will believe, that according to my poor capacity, I will serve her majesty diligently and faithfully, and that I shall always be with the utmost truth and respect, &c."

Before these arrangements, the minor difficulties respecting the offices of attorney and solicitor general were obviated. Sir James Montague was appointed attorney-general on the 19th of October, and his vacant place was conferred on Mr. Robert Eyre. An appointment was also found for Sir Peter King, who had been originally a candidate for the solicitorship, and was supported by the zealous whigs. As the queen refused to yield to his nomination, in resentment for his violent attacks on the admiralty, he was first proposed for the situation of speaker; but the dispute respecting this important station being settled by a compromise with the court in favour of Sir Richard Onslow, he was gratified with the appointment of recorder to the city of London, which was purposely vacated, by the nomination of the actual

recorder to the office of baron of the court of exchequer. By these arrangements the whigs were apparently gratified, and again tacitly coalesced with the court. The joint influence of the united parties being predominant in the new parliament, the proceedings met with no difficulty in foreign affairs and the grant of supplies; and encountered only a faint opposition, on the part of the scottish members, to the arrangements arising from the Union.

With the death of the prince of Denmark may be connected an event, not unworthy of a place in these pages, although it produced no permanent effect on the state of domestic politics. This was, the temporary renewal of the intercourse between the queen and the duchess.

After the last acrimonious interview, a sense of wounded pride induced the duchess to remain silent, in conformity with the resolution which she had announced to the duke; and the unusual interval of several weeks appears to have elapsed, without any communication between her and the queen. As the crisis of the prince's last malady approached, her feelings of respect and attachment towards her sovereign revived; and she sent a letter of condolence to her afflicted mistress, though she could not avoid recurring to their recent altercation.

"*Windsor Lodge, Oct. 26.* — Though the last time I had the honour to wait upon your majesty, your usage of me was such as was scarce possible for me to imagine, or for any body to believe, yet I cannot hear of so great a misfortune and afflic-

tion to you, as the condition in which the prince is, without coming to pay my duty, in enquiring after your health; and to see, if in any particular whatsoever, my service can either be agreeable or useful to you, for which satisfaction, I would do more than I will trouble your majesty to read at this time."

She had scarcely written this letter, before farther accounts of the prince's danger induced her to travel all night, and repair to Kensington. She desired the person charged with her letter, to inform the queen that she waited her majesty's commands. She was accordingly summoned into the royal presence, in the afternoon; but the queen received her, to use her own expression, "very coolly, and like a stranger." It was not to be expected that, after the recent dispute, the queen should accept this mark of attention, introduced as it was with expressions calculated to recall her past indignities; but the duchess was not discouraged by the repulse. She again waited on the queen the ensuing morning, and was present at the moment when the prince expired. With affectionate zeal she removed her royal mistress from this sad spectacle to her closet, and desiring the other attendants to withdraw, she knelt down, and endeavoured to soothe the agonies of her grief, continuing in that posture till the first emotions had subsided. She then urged the imprudence of remaining in a place, which must continually awaken her sorrow, and pressed her to remove to St. James's. Her importunities were for a considerable time fruitless; but at length her arguments

prevailed. The queen delivered her watch to the duchess, desiring her to retire till the hand had reached a particular point, and ordered her to send Mrs. Masham. Though shocked at this mark of preference, the duchess withdrew, but did not summon the favourite, from an unwillingness to shew her own decline of influence, before the crowd which was collected in the anti-chamber. After preparing her own coach for the queen's reception, and desiring the company to retire, while her majesty was passing, she returned at the appointed moment, announced that the carriage was ready, and excused herself for not delivering the message to Mrs. Masham, adding, "your majesty may send for her at St. James's, when and how you please."

The queen acquiesced, and Mrs. Hill, the sister of Mrs. Masham, approaching to put on her hood, her majesty gave her some commission in a whisper. As she passed through the gallery, leaning on the arm of the duchess, Mrs. Masham herself appeared, accompanied by Dr. Arbuthnot, one of the physicians of the household. The queen did not speak, but cast on her a look of regard. After giving some orders, relative to domestic business, she entered the carriage; and immediately desired the duchess to request the lord treasurer to order an examination, whether there was room in one of the royal vaults at Westminster to receive the body of the prince and her own; and if not, to select another place of burial.

Having escorted her majesty to St. James's, and induced her to take some refreshment, the duchess

retired, and the lord treasurer was admitted. But the queen soon followed her to her apartment, and not finding her there, sent a note, which marks her minute attention to all the details of the interment.

"I scratched twice at dear Mrs. Freeman's door, as soon as lord treasurer went from me, in hopes to have spoke one more word to him before he was gone; but nobody hearing me, I wrote this, not caring to send what I had to say by word of mouth; which was, to desire him, that when he sends his orders to Kensington, he would give directions there may be a great many yeomen of the guards to carry the prince's dear body, that it may not be let fall, the great stairs being very steep and slippery."

In the evening the duchess found the queen at table, and attended by Mrs. Masham, who instantly retired; but she carefully avoided any allusion to the new favourite, and the queen treated her with marks of renewed regard and familiarity. This was, however, a mere momentary change; for the duchess observes, that in her subsequent visits, she either found Mrs. Masham with the queen, or retiring on her entrance, and, indeed, reaped nothing from this sacrifice of her pride, except the mortification of observing the superior favour of her rival, and the decline of her own influence. *

* From a narrative of the events which took place on the death of the prince of Denmark, by the duchess.

CHAPTER 76.

1709.

Political and military arrangements at the Hague.—Marlborough induces the dutch government to consent to an augmentation of troops.—Obtains from the emperor a promise, that his troops should winter in the Netherlands, and that succours should be sent from Naples to Spain.—Conclusion of the accommodation with the pope.—Ineffectual labours to conciliate the duke of Savoy, and to reconcile him with the court of Vienna.—Arrangements with the king of Prussia, for the continuance and augmentation of his troops.

In the general arrangements, Marlborough had not only to combat the intrigues of the party in Holland, who were obstinately bent on peace, but he had likewise to resist the exorbitant demands of the dutch government, for the extension of their barrier, and particularly for the possession of Ostend. He encountered additional difficulty in vanquishing their objections to the intended augmentation of troops. He found the pensionary timid and hesitating, the adherents of France pertinacious and vehement, and even the best intentioned, more deeply impressed with their own financial embarrassments, than with the importance of the stake for which they were contending. He, however, exerted, with effect, his customary influence over the mind of Heinsius, overawed the partisans of France, and extorted the consent of

the government to an augmentation of 6000 men, which, though not equal to the urgency of the case, was yet commensurate with their means, and proportionate to the supply which he had obtained from the british administration.

In his negotiations with the imperial court, he experienced no difficulty respecting the conduct of the war in the Netherlands, as Eugene, who was the channel of his communications, was no less satisfied than himself, that the principal effort of the enemy would be made in that quarter. It was therefore readily settled, that the imperial troops should winter in the Netherlands, and that a proper augmentation should be made. As the States refused to consent that both he and Eugene should be absent at the same time, he obtained from his colleague a promise to return to the Netherlands in the latter end of February, and himself wrote to procure the sanction of the emperor.

"The prince of Savoy," he observed, "will communicate to your imperial majesty the letter of the States, urging the necessity that one of us should remain in the Low Countries during the ensuing winter; and as there is no time to receive the necessary orders, we have agreed, under the good pleasure of your imperial majesty, that his highness should immediately depart for Vienna, with the hopes that your imperial majesty will consent to his return, to relieve me towards the latter end of February. Having since received the approbation of the queen, on the conclusion of the campaign, we repaired hither without delay, and instantly began to concert with the States, and

the ministers of the allied powers, the measures for an augmentation of troops, and the necessary preparations, for opposing the mighty efforts of the enemy the ensuing campaign in the Netherlands, whither they are drawing from the Rhine and Italy 52 squadrons and 51 battalions more than they had last year. We find the States well disposed to make all possible exertions; but in truth their efforts have so much exhausted them, that we cannot expect the assistance necessary in the present extremity. I can assure your imperial majesty, that the state of England is not much better, the queen having strained every nerve; so that we are under the necessity of imploring your assistance, and earnestly exhorting your imperial majesty to forward, with all possible expedition, the succours of troops, as well for Italy as other quarters, which, with all due submission, policy, as well as the principles of war, require in the present crisis, leaving, however, the 20,000 men under the command of the duke of Savoy, since we expect a powerful diversion on the side of Piedmont in our favour, provided a speedy accommodation can be effected with the pope, either by persuasion or force.

"I ought not to conceal from your imperial majesty, that the prospect of an approaching peace induces the States to make their final exertions, with the hopes that the next campaign will be the last; so that we ought not to omit any effort which may lead to a happy termination of the war. Your imperial majesty will permit me to refer you for further information to the prince of Savoy, who

will deliver this letter, and do justice to my respect and devotion." *

Meanwhile the negotiation for peace had produced a considerable sensation at the court of Vienna; and the proposal relative to the cession of Naples and Sicily to the bourbon prince, again prompted the emperor to anticipate the sacrifice of his interests, by adding the conquest of Sicily to that of Naples. Marlborough, however, strenuously combated a design, which would create the same mischief as the invasion of Naples, and, at length, not only succeeded in dissuading him from the enterprise, but even obtained a promise, that he would send from the army in Naples, a farther succour of 3000 men, to the assistance of his brother. This resolution was communicated in a letter from the emperor himself, dated Jan. 28. to which we find a grateful and respectful reply from the duke.

" *Feb.* 13. — Sire; I received with profound respect the letter which your imperial majesty did me the honour to write me the 20th of last month, with that of count Zinzendorf, in which I observe, with great pleasure, the resolution you have taken to assist his catholic majesty vigorously, in order to bring the war in Spain to a happy termination. Within three days I shall depart for the Hague, where I will not fail to represent, in a proper light, the laudable designs of your imperial majesty to the States, in order to induce their high mightinesses

* Translated from a copy of the original, which is preserved in the archives at Vienna, communicated by his imperial highness the archduke John.

to concur in them; and I do not doubt, that the queen, my mistress, will continue, as she has hitherto done, to exert her utmost efforts for procuring the restitution of the spanish monarchy to its legitimate sovereign. I write by this post to the court on the subject, and I flatter myself that your imperial majesty will soon find it confirmed by the count de Gallas. With regard to myself, I am persuaded that you will do me the justice to believe, that I have never spared my exertions to promote the interests of your august house, and that I shall never cease to testify my respectful and inviolable attachment."

While engaged in these negotiations, Marlborough had the satisfaction to hear that the long-pending dispute with the see of Rome had been arranged, on terms no less honourable to the emperor than advantageous to the common cause. The particulars of the transaction were communicated by the marquis de Prié, imperial embassador at Rome.

"*Rome, Jan.* 18. — My lord; The anxiety which your highness has manifested, to be acquainted as early as possible with the termination of the engagement which his imperial majesty has formed with this court, obliges me to impart to your highness the fortunate conclusion of the treaty, which, after much dispute and difficulty, was signed the 15th of this month, by cardinal Paulucci and myself, as plenipotentiaries of the pope and the emperor. I have every reason to hope that this sincere reconciliation will, in future, remove every subject of suspicion, and overthrow

all the hopes of our enemies; since not only the public, but the court itself has sufficiently known the reason that his imperial majesty had to take umbrage at this armament, and the moderation with which he has acted in the occurrence. The new levies of the pope will be disbanded in a fortnight, his troops and his garrisons will be re-established on the ancient footing; and all suspected and foreign officers are already dismissed. His holiness has even engaged to prevent all the intrigues which the malcontents of Naples, who are settled at Rome and in the ecclesiastical state, may employ against the repose of that kingdom. Comacchio is to remain in the hands of the emperor, till the rights of the emperor and of the holy see have been explained and discussed in the congress which I am to hold with a deputation of cardinals. The differences which exist, relative to Parma and Placentia, will be examined in this same conference, in order to treat on them amicably; that his holiness and his imperial majesty may reciprocally satisfy each other, and render mutual justice on their respective pretensions. These, my lord, are the most essential articles of the treaty, of which the publication has been deferred, till it has received the ratification of his imperial majesty.

" I have obtained a point still more essential for the glory of the most august house, and for the interest of the common cause. It is the acknowledgment of his catholic majesty king Charles 3d, to whom his holiness grants all the prerogatives which depend on the holy see; among which, are

the Crusado, the Indultos, and the nomination, as well to bishoprics and benefices, as to the cardinals' hat. His holiness will send a nuntio to the court of Barcelona, and will receive at Rome an embassador from his majesty. He will even grant a bull, with regard to the ecclesiastics of the kingdoms which shall be under his obedience, in conformity with that which has been granted to the duke of Anjou, which has occasioned so many abuses in Spain, to the great prejudice of the public cause. The Spanish people may thus be entirely disabused of the false impressions given by the ecclesiastics, who are partisans of that prince. We have every reason in the world to hope that this declaration of his holiness, which renders justice to the rights of king Charles 3d, will favour the success of the allied arms, which no longer encounter the same obstacles from the prejudices of the spanish people.

" All the french party at this court have made inconceivable efforts to oppose our accommodation, and above all, to prevent this acknowledgment, which is thought likely to be very fatal to the duke of Anjou. After having employed all sorts of machinations, by means of their numerous partisans and emissaries, they have acted openly by protests and menaces. Your highness will easily judge to what a degree the disquietude and resentment of France have been excited, by the last letter which the marshal de Tessé wrote to his holiness. The ministers of the two crowns have declared very openly their intention of quitting this court, and breaking off all communication as

soon as this acknowledgment shall be published. Notwithstanding these protests, the pope shews much good disposition, and even firmness, to support the assurances that he has already given, and to proceed to this declaration in form, in a congregation of cardinals to be held for the purpose. I shall be too fortunate, if this petty dispute, which we have had with this court, should terminate in a quarrel with that of France; and if the pope should be obliged, by the violent proceedings of the enemy, to favour the interests of the public cause. I have endeavoured to make known to the pope and the sacred college, that those of this court, and even of all Europe, will be incontestibly attached to the entire re-establishment of the spanish monarchy, under the ancient domination of the most august house of Austria.

" We have thus terminated this engagement, which gave so much alarm to all the allies. All the imperial troops and auxiliaries are going as soon as possible to quit the ecclesiastical state, according to the orders of the emperor. They will repair to their usual winter quarters, after having drawn near three months' subsistence from this country.

" I thought proper to beg vice-admiral Whitaker to suspend the bombardment of Civita Vecchia, in order not to irritate this court and raise new difficulties to the treaty. I continue at present the same instances in promoting a reconciliation. The pope hopes that his imperial majesty will employ his good offices with her britannic majesty, and that they will not be useless, in relieving us entirely from disquietude. He strongly protested to me,

that he had given no succour in money to favour the expedition to Scotland.

" Our quarrel with the pope being entirely terminated, and the disarming being already begun, there will be no more difficulty in the embarkation of the troops for Catalonia, which would have been very dangerous, while we were in very great alarm for the armaments of this court, and the troubles which our enemies fomented in Naples. I have had directions from the king to hasten the conclusion, which I have executed as I ought, although the orders of the emperor, and the attention of cardinal Grimani will render my cares very little necessary. I beg you, my lord, to accept this new assurance of the perfect attachment with which I am, &c."

" *Rome, May* 18. — My lord; Your highness will doubtless have learnt by way of Lisbon, that the nuntio has been driven out of Madrid, and that the nuntiature there has been shut up, a thing unheard of in Spain, and what was never done at Vienna, at the very time when we were in the greatest misintelligence with this court. The duke of Medina Sidonia, who was charged with the commission of intimating this to the nuntio, left in his hands the protest of which I do myself the honour to send you the annexed copy. The offensive terms in which it is conceived, and the precipitate resolution that has been taken, mark sufficiently the resentment entertained at Madrid, in consequence of the acknowledgment of king Charles the third, and of the assurances which have been given by the pope, although these have

not been hitherto published. The nuntio reported to the pope, that the council was divided on this deliberation. The wisest ministers were not willing to proceed to such an extremity, without being assured that France would enter into the same engagement; but those who are more zealous Anjouists, have rather followed passion than the interest of the duke of Anjou, in carrying things to a rupture. They have even published, by this proof of resentment, the acknowledgment of his catholic majesty, and undeceived the people from the error, into which the ecclesiastic partisans of that prince had led them, as well with regard to the justice of his cause, as to the impressions they had given that this was a war of religion. It is pretended that the council of the cabinet (in which the princess Orsini and the french embassador have a great share) has much contributed to this resolution. The step has produced so bad an effect in Spain, and so much prejudice to the interests of the duke of Anjou, that many people have suspected that the good spaniards and well-intentioned have given the impulse to all this, to complete the ruin of that prince's affairs.

"I have done all I could to inflame the indignation of the pope against a son who is so little grateful, that he has forgotten, in an instant, all the distinctions and favours he has hitherto enjoyed. I have taken this indirect way to urge him no longer to keep any measures, and to publish the acknowledgment in the consistory, which is still stopped by some little difficulties, on certain points to which the pope lays claim, as well with regard

to sequestrations as to the counter-declaration of nullity, which his imperial majesty has made relative to Parma and Placentia. I have discovered from good authority, that the strongest reason which at present restrains the pope is, the reports which the french propagate here, that the kingdoms of Naples and Sicily will fall to the share of the duke of Anjou. Although I have contradicted these ill-founded rumours, the french partisans, who are very numerous, do all they can to intimidate this court, and to shew the danger of having a powerful and hostile prince for a neighbour. The same reports have been spread at Naples by the Anjou party, and have inspired the ill-intentioned with new courage. What gives them more appearance of truth is, seeing Sicily still in the hands of the enemy; and as this conquest is very easy, both from the good disposition of the people, and the weakness of the enemy, we cannot convince this court, that the two Maritime Powers will not furnish transports, because they are of opinion that the enterprise should not be attempted, lest it should disconcert their views of a partition. These are false reasonings, which, however, make much impression, and prevent us from tranquillising the kingdom of Naples, and bringing back this court entirely. Hence it is to be wished, that we could quickly draw the enemy from that kingdom, or at least shut them up in Messina.

"The duke of Medina and cardinal del Giudici have received orders to depart, and are, in fact, gone this week; so that we are masters of the field of battle. Although the change is very

considerable here, I hope this court will enter still more into its true interests, and that the successes of the campaign will contribute more to it than negotiation, which will always be carried on to more advantage the instant we press the least to enter into it. It is certain that the pope appears much alarmed, lest Naples and Sicily should be detached from the body of the monarchy, because this court would be reduced to slavery, if those kingdoms were to fall into the hands of a prince of the house of Bourbon."*

Among the different cares which pressed on the attention of Marlborough during his continuance at the Hague, we may assign a prominent place to the arrangements with the duke of Savoy. This prince, as usual, making the attainment of one acquisition the prelude to a new demand, required the cession of the Vigevenasco, which he had before claimed of the court of Vienna, or in lieu of it, the Novarresi. He claimed also the imperial fief of Savona, in liquidation of his arrears. He strenuously laboured to interest the Maritime Powers in his behalf; and declared his resolution not to take the field unless his wishes were gratified. In addition to these pretensions, he even solicited the queen to negotiate a marriage between his son and an archduchess. These proposals encountered the same opposition as his former demands from the court of Vienna, who now finding his services less necessary, suffered their jealousy of his encroaching and ambitious spirit, to

* Translation from the original letter in the french tongue.

obliterate their sense of the obligations which he had rendered at the most dangerous crisis of the war.

At the same time that he produced this series of demands, he suggested different plans of operation for the ensuing campaign, which he conceived calculated to lure the attention of the allies. The principal was, a proposal to penetrate into Upper Dauphiné, on which point three objects presented themselves: the reduction of Mont Dauphin and Briançon; the capture of Fort Barreaux, and an irruption into the heart of the Lyonnois; and the last and most important, an invasion of Franche Comté, where he proposed to act in concert with the army on the Rhine, provided that army was commanded by prince Eugene. For this object, he required a force of 50,000 men, a considerable subsidy in money, and an absolute authority over all the troops under his command, both in the field and in quarters.

Marlborough was perfectly aware that the project was too extensive and chimerical to be realised, and that many of the conditions were proposed with a conviction that they could not be granted. But the services of a prince who held the keys of Italy, and who was at this time sedulously courted by France, were too important to be undervalued. As it was therefore necessary to retain him in the interest of the alliance, the british general laboured to procure such a compliance from the court of Vienna, as would prevent his defection. With this view he deliberated on the proposed projects with prince Eugene, in the presence of count

Maffei, minister of Savoy, count Schulemburg, the imperial envoy at the Hague, and general Palmes. They approved the design of penetrating into the Lyonnois, and Palmes was commissioned to promote the pretensions of the duke at Vienna. He was afterwards to repair to Turin, and convey such assurances from the queen as were calculated to satisfy him that no endeavours would be wanting, to obtain the fulfilment of his demands, and to forward his design of invading the * Lyonnois. Marlborough was however too well acquainted with the characters both of the emperor and the duke, to place any reliance on the successful event of this arrangement; and he drew but an unfavourable augury of the effect which was likely to result from the military operations on the side of the Alps.

The negotiations with the court of Berlin were attended with the same difficulties as at the close of every campaign. The king of Prussia, as usual, produced a long series of complaints and demands. He cavilled with the dutch for obstructing his pretensions to the petty county of Meurs, and for delaying to discharge the arrears of their subsidies. He even expressed displeasure with the british government, for undervaluing his services, and omitting any mention of his name in the speech or address, while they lauded and rewarded the zeal of the landgrave of Hesse and the elector of Hanover. These grievances were accompanied with the usual threat of withdrawing his auxiliary

* Instructions for general Palmes on his mission to the duke of Savoy.

troops. His example influenced the dependants of his court; for the grand chamberlain expressed strong jealousy at the applications which were made to other ministers; and his lady demanded the same gratification for her assistance, as had been granted to count Piper through his * countess. Lastly, lord Raby, who had been maintained in the office of british embassador, by the influence of Marlborough, emulated the querulous style of those with whom he associated, by expatiating on the slights with which he had been treated, in being refused the order of the garter, the title of earl, and a place in one of the public departments. He even profited by a temporary journey to England, to pay court to Harley and Mrs. Masham.

The interference of Marlborough could alone obviate the mischiefs arising from this combination of jarring interests, and his interposition was attended with the usual effect. A single letter from him appeared to pacify the king of Prussia; while the chamberlain and his lady either obtained a partial gratification, or yielded to the change of sentiment which they perceived in their sovereign. Lord Raby was awed by that master spirit, which habit had taught him to respect, and we find his letters soon resuming the language of compliment and adulation. In short, the brief interval of a few weeks produced a sudden change in the lowering aspect of the prussian court; and the auxiliary troops were not only permitted to continue in the stations where their services had been employed

* Letter from general Palmes to the duke.

with advantage, but the king consented to an augmentation of 5000 men for the ensuing campaign; an acquisition of no ordinary value in the eyes of the commander-in-chief, who expressed the highest opinion of their valour and * discipline. This revolution of sentiment was announced in the most gracious terms by the king himself.

Notwithstanding this solemn promise, and the apparent renewal of his good humour, the capricious monarch soon began again to contend for more advantageous terms, and accused the duke of having spoken slightingly of himself, and of neglecting his interests. His chagrin was augmented by the intrigues of lord Raby.

To pacify the monarch, lieut.-general Grumbkow was deputed to Berlin, with the hope that an accurate knowledge of the king's character, and an acquaintance with the cabals of the court, would enable him to effect an accommodation. He was authorised to grant the allowance of bread and forage to the cavalry, and instead of the former mode of payment for the infantry, to offer a subsidy, by which the king would be entitled to the extra pay of a company in each regiment, and to the salary of more officers than he was obliged to maintain. Marlborough also remitted the usual deduction of $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent., which, as commander-in-chief, he was empowered to receive from all the princes who furnished auxiliary troops. General Grumbkow transmitted an interesting account of

* To lord Godolphin, Dec. 20. and letter from the duke of Marlborough to lord Raby, June 31. 1709.

this mission, which proved in every point satisfactory.

"*Berlin, March* 9. — My lord; I arrived here Tuesday last, and the same evening saw my lord Raby, but I could not draw much information from him. I went the next morning early to the house of M. Ilgen, who told me that the grand chamberlain was mortally ill of a pleurisy, accompanied with a high fever; that I should find the king very obstinate on the point of the fifth battalion, which he had dismissed; and that the field marshal and he were extremely eager that this affair should be finished, so that he placed his hope only in me. He begged me, in the name of God, to speak freely to the king. I said that should not be long delayed, and, at the same time, a servant of the king, who had heard of my arrival, was already in search of me. His majesty received me with much affection, embraced me warmly, and after a moment's conversation, enquired for the health of your highness, adding, 'Is he still my friend, and does he sometimes 'remember me?' I told him, that your highness would be much more his friend, if his majesty would reflect a little more, and pay a little more attention to the just propositions made him on your part. He said, 'Can I do more than I do? 'I make treaties, and yet the emperor breaks his 'word with me, as well as Holland every moment. 'This disgusts me. Besides, it is impossible, 'without great inconvenience, to give more than 'three battalions, and he is a wretch who would 'advise me otherwise.' Being then quite full of

the republican air, which I had recently breathed in Holland, I told him boldly, that I thought he was a wretch who should advise him not to do it, and that I would prove this by many arguments. He said, with much emotion, ‘ You speak very ‘ boldly, and you may perhaps repent it, if your ‘ arguments are not conclusive.’ I replied, if he would listen to them, without prejudice or prepossession, he would find them so; and in about half an hour I changed him so entirely, that he sent for the field marshal, and, in my presence, related to him word for word what I had said, ordering him, as an honest man, to give his opinion on what ought to be done. The field marshal in a few words observed, that it was necessary, not only to do it, but that if he was master, he would advise him to do still more to oblige the queen, and preserve so true and good a friend as your highness. The king then said, ‘ Well, it is de- ‘ cided; consult, and see what you think ought ‘ to be done. I shall not be the person who will ‘ make the most difficulties.’ On this the field marshal retired, and I remained half an hour longer with the king, and he told me his views, which are not ill digested. I shall give your highness a detail of them, when I have the honour to see you.

“ As I thought there was a little bitterness where your highness was concerned, I turned him so many ways, that he observed, he would tell me what was the matter. But as he was persuaded that it was false, by all I had told him of your highness, I must not speak a single word of it to

you. ‘ First,’ he said, ‘ I have been informed ‘ that the queen refused to take my troops entirely ‘ into her pay, which would have relieved me ‘ much, and that it was no one but my lord duke ‘ who prevented her. Secondly, that you had ‘ shewn in many instances this campaign, that you ‘ did not think it necessary to have much regard ‘ for a prince, whom you managed as you pleased, ‘ and that you made a good use of his troops, be- ‘ cause he understood nothing of the business.’ I told him for the second article, nothing was more ridiculous than to imagine such a thing; since even if your highness was capable of a similar thought, you had too much discernment to speak of it to any one. For the first, I thought he who had spread the report would have much difficulty to prove it. At last the king swore, that if your highness would continue his friend, he would do every thing in the world to give you pleasure. But he ordered me to remind you of every thing he had done, from consideration for the queen, and particularly for your highness during this war, there being no prince, except the emperor and the two maritime powers, who had so many troops in the field as himself, although he had neither crowns nor states to expect, like the elector of Hanover, the duke of Savoy, and the elector palatine. But he hoped that your highness would continue in the same sentiments which you had testified to me, namely, to promote a close alliance between himself and Great Britain, when attempts should be made to conclude a peace.

“ On the morrow we examined the project in

the presence of the prince royal, the field marshal, M. d'Ilgen, and Messrs. Krant and Beck. I had much trouble to make them comprehend many things, and to prevent them from introducing into the project a thousand points which would not have been accepted on the part of your highness. The words are changed, but the sense and foundation are the same, except 50 rations more, which they demand for each battalion, during the winter, and without which the officers cannot subsist. When I opposed this article, the prince royal told me he was persuaded your highness would grant that, and when it was considered that we sent all our best and finest troops, and that the king paid the regiment of Mecklenburgh entirely, and added two squadrons more, he was very well assured that your highness would make no difficulty, since the maintenance of 14 squadrons, of which the king received the agio for only 12, cost him, besides the subsidy, three hundred thousand francs. After some other remarks, he continued, with a petulant air, 'My lord duke may grumble to no purpose. 'If he lays his hand on his heart, he must own 'that he does not find among other princes so 'much facility and so much good faith as with us; 'and if this new corps is not as fine as that of 'count Lottum, let him accuse me; for I am sure 'he will be satisfied, and I will pledge my word 'that the troops shall be on the Meuse the 1st of 'May.'

"Afterwards, the prince insisted much on the article of not putting the infantry in garrison, in the maritime places, or those of Flanders, alleging

the treaty for the hanoverians, and shewing letters from our officers, who are in garrison at Lille, and who bitterly complain.

" The rest is such as I think your highness will find no difficulty in, and there will be no objection with regard to the 2½ per cent., I having told them that it should be abated, with which they are satisfied.

" Lastly, I am in the joy of my heart that this business is finished, and that I have been happy enough to justify the confidence which your highness has reposed in me. And I may assert that the king has never shewn me more confidence and friendship than since I have opened his eyes on many things. My lord Raby could not refrain from shewing me how much he is piqued, because your highness did not name him to sign this treaty. He assured me that if he had chosen to exert himself, the court would have solicited your highness for him to have had that satisfaction, which has not happened to him since his residence here; but that he did not wish to insist on it, for fear of displeasing your highness. All I can say is, that he has not seen the king since I have been here; and that he has told one of his confidants with a sneer, that I played the minister of the queen so well, he had no occasion to interfere. I must own, that if Madame la Grande Chambellane was as much mistress as she wishes, the thing might have gone as lord Raby desired. But happily it is not so; and the king told me this evening that he was delighted because the business had passed through the hands of general Cadogan. * * * * *

"The king dined at noon with the prince royal, and has made him a considerable present. The prince is highly gratified to serve this campaign. He presents a thousand compliments to your highness, for whom he has a hundred bottles of Tokay. He will go from hence the 26th of next month, and will travel post to Brussels."

The king announced this fortunate change himself, in a letter to the duke.

"*Berlin, March* 9.—My cousin; Brigadier Grumbkow has just delivered to me the letter which you wrote to me on the 24th of February, and has at the same time explained to me the conditions on which you were pleased to agree with me, touching the augmentation of my troops in the Low Countries. As the said brigadier praised much the good intention which you have displayed on this occasion for my interests, and as you have very obligingly assured him, that you would always continue the same, both with regard to my interests during the war, and to those which concern me in peace, I have not only chosen to testify to you, by this letter, the obligation I am under to you, but to give also, above the 12 squadrons that you have asked of me, two others, as a more certain proof of the zeal and warmth I feel in giving pleasure to the queen your mistress, and to yourself; and to concur with all my forces in the glorious designs that you have formed for the ensuing campaign. I will tell you at the same time, that except a few necessary explanations, for which I refer you to Grumbkow, I have accepted your offers, and do not doubt that you will be satisfied

with the counter project which will be delivered to you, and that you will give full power to general Cadogan, to sign it on the footing above mentioned with brigadier Grumbkow, when he shall arrive at Brussels, which will be at the end of this month.

" I cannot avoid also stating to you, that as I have deemed it necessary to join to the new corps, which I send you, a lieutenant-general, a major-general, and a brigadier, I do not doubt that you will gratify them with such douceurs as may enable them to serve with comfort; and as besides I know perfectly the service which I have received from brigadier Du Troussel and Grumbkow, I will pay all the consideration you can wish, to what you write me in their favour.

" Moreover, my cousin, I am glad of this opportunity to tell you again, that notwithstanding the court of Vienna has not paid me the money for the recruits, which has been owing to me several years, and notwithstanding I see no appearance of touching any part of it for a long time, I have nevertheless given orders that the recruits necessary for the troops I have in Italy should march immediately, hoping from your equity, that you will be pleased to employ the credit, which her majesty ought so justly to have with the emperor, to induce him at last to give me the requisite satisfaction, as well with regard to these recruits, as to many other articles, which I have long solicited at the imperial court with much reason, but without any appearance of success." *

* This letter, as well as the preceding ones, are translated from the french originals.

Marlborough had thus the satisfaction of forming the most advantageous arrangements with the principal members of the Grand Alliance for the ensuing campaign; and he would have proceeded without delay to attend his parliamentary duty in England, had not his presence been required at the Hague, to watch the negotiations for peace which the king of France had recently opened with the dutch government.

CHAPTER 77.

1708—1709.

Parliamentary proceedings. — Grant of supplies, and augmentation of troops. — Vote of thanks to general Webb, for the action at Wynendale. — Counter address to the queen on the successes of the campaign. — Vote of thanks to Marlborough. — Ineffectual attempt to censure the ministry for their conduct in the late invasion. — Alienation of the queen from Godolphin. — Renewed complaints and jealousies of the whigs. — Dissatisfaction of Halifax and Sunderland. — Resentment of the treasurer and the duchess against the whigs. — Perplexities of Marlborough.

The duke of Marlborough did not personally witness the struggle which terminated in the promotion of Somers, being detained at the Hague by military and political business, till the session was nearly closed.

The new parliament, which was the first elected since the Union, met on the 16th of November, and as the queen was too much afflicted by her recent loss to attend in person, the session was opened by commission.

The choice of a speaker having been previously arranged, by a compromise between Godolphin and the whigs, Sir Richard Onslow, a whig of moderate principles, was called to the chair.

The commissioners having approved the speaker, lord chancellor Cowper addressed the two houses

in the name of the queen. He dwelt with a mixture of piety and exultation on the past successes of the allied arms, and the near prospect of an honourable and lasting accommodation, adding, "her majesty believes it impossible that the representatives of the british nation can submit to an insecure and dishonourable peace." After demanding adequate supplies for the war, he employed expressions calculated to quiet the minds of those who had carried on a clandestine correspondence with the court of St. Germain's, preparatory to a comprehensive act of grace, which was introduced in the course of the session.

The addresses of the two houses were perfectly in unison with the style of the speech, and the sentiments of the ministers. After condolence on the death of the prince, the lords testified their readiness to give all proper support for the prosecution of the just and necessary war in which the nation was engaged; and in reference to the pending negotiations, concluded with repeating their former declaration, that no peace could be safe or honourable, till the whole monarchy of Spain was restored to the house of Austria. The commons pledged themselves to grant such supplies, as should enable the queen to obtain an honourable and lasting peace, and concluded with an assurance, that they would defend her title to the crown, disappoint the hopes and designs of the pretender, together with his open and secret abettors, and maintain the protestant succession, as by law established.

Arrangements were made for the scrutiny of the

contested elections, and the partiality manifested in the decisions fully proved the ascendancy of the whigs. Meanwhile both houses entered into the consideration of the means for the prosecution of the war. An augmentation of 10,000 men was voted, and a supply of seven millions assigned for the service of the year.

Notwithstanding the powerful support which the government derived from the whigs, neither the merits of the great commander, nor the zeal of his friends, could shield him from the attacks of factious opposition. The incidents connected with the action of Wynendale furnished an opportunity of which the tories did not neglect to profit. The first information of that brilliant exploit, which appears to have been transmitted by some indirect channel, ascribed the principal merit of the achievement to general Cadogan, as the senior officer. This statement being hastily printed in the Gazette, general Webb was deeply offended, and published an explanatory narrative, in support of his own fame. Every endeavour was used by government to counteract the consequences of their own misstatement; the gallant general was honoured with the recommendation of the commander-in-chief, and the rewards of his sovereign, and appears to have been satisfied with the reparation which he received. But the enemies of the duke accused him of envy towards a subordinate officer, as well as of partiality to his own favourite, and brought the question before parliament.

A motion was accordingly made by Sir Thomas Hanmer to remedy this act of injustice, by passing

a public vote of thanks to general Webb, for his conduct in the action at Wynendale. On this occasion Mr. Bromley sarcastically remarked, "I do not disapprove the custom, which has been recently introduced, of returning thanks to those generals who have performed eminent services, especially when they receive these compliments as modestly as the worthy member to whom they are made, has now done. But I observe with grief, that a certain commander, on whom not only the thanks of both houses, but also great rewards have been bestowed, appears yet to be unsatisfied."

The friends of Marlborough were conscious that the omission of major-general Webb's name in the official account, though a mere oversight, was an act of injustice, and therefore were not provoked by this cruel sarcasm to make any opposition: the motion accordingly passed unanimously. The lords, however, acted with more dignity, in declining to take the matter into consideration; and both houses of parliament made ample amends, by a congratulatory address to the queen, on the victories of the great commander, in terms worthy of his stupendous successes.

Nor were the partisans of government and the friends of Marlborough satisfied with this reparation, however public and distinguished; for soon after the recess, the commons passed a vote of thanks to the duke himself, "not only for his great and eminent services, in the last successful campaign, but for his indefatigable zeal and perseverance in the common cause." This vote being

transmitted to him abroad, by the speaker, he replied in a letter dated Brussels, Feb. 13th.

"Sir; — I am extremely sensible of the great honour, which the house of commons have done me, in the vote you have been pleased to transmit me, by their order. Nothing can give me more satisfaction than to find the services I have endeavoured to do the queen and my country, so acceptable to the house of commons. And I beg the favour of you to assure them, I shall never think any pains or perseverance too great, if I may, by God's blessing, be instrumental in producing a safe and honourable peace, for her majesty and my fellow-subjects."

Notwithstanding the triumphant result of the motion for an address of thanks, an opportunity was soon afterwards taken, by the opposite party, to attack the administration in general, and Godolphin and Marlborough in particular. On the customary discussion relative to the state of the nation, lord Haversham adverted to the late invasion, accused the ministers of negligence or treachery, and commented with great severity on the conduct of the government towards lord Griffin, and the two sons of lord Middleton, who, though taken in actual rebellion, had been screened from justice. He adverted also to the arrest of the duke of Hamilton, and other suspected Jacobites, which he represented not as a measure of prevention, but as a reprehensible artifice to secure the majority in the scottish elections.

These accusations were evidently intended as a revival of the charges formerly advanced against

the general and treasurer, for their correspondence with the exiled family. But the whigs did not suffer the attack to pass unrepelled. A statement of the conduct of government was submitted to the legislature by secretary Boyle, and both houses concurred in an address, justifying the ministers, and declaring that much effectual care had been taken by those employed by her majesty, at the time of the intended invasion, to disappoint the designs of her enemies, both at home and abroad.

The result of these motions, and the zeal which the whigs manifested in support of government, seemed to indicate a cordial union between them and the two ministers, as well as the tacit satisfaction of the sovereign in the recent appointments. But these auspicious appearances, which awakened the hopes of the treasurer, and tranquillised the mind of the general, were soon dissipated. The queen was indignant at the violence offered to her feelings and prejudices, by the compulsory promotion of the whig chiefs; and turning on Godolphin the resentment which she had hitherto fostered against the obnoxious party, she treated him with unusual reserve; while she held forth every encouragement to those who were opposed to her government. The effects of this treatment appear in a letter from the treasurer.

"*Dec.* 24. *Christmas Eve*, 1708. — By the last post I acknowledged the favour of yours of the 30th, by the messenger, with the good news of the surrender of Ghent, which I confess to you is very much allayed to me, by finding at the same time

that the hopes I had of your coming over to us very soon after so happy an end of the campaign, are still adjourned to a farther time, of which time also, there is no other certainty, but that it is very remote. Now, I must beg leave to be so plain as to assure you, that though by all that has passed hitherto, in this session of parliament, things may appear beyond sea to be upon a very good foot here, as to the support of the war; yet with relation to the credit of the government, and the administration at home, they are in a very uncertain and precarious condition, full of all manner of distractions and jealousies, which our people are but too apt to have of one another, at all times. But what gives the greatest occasion for the present ferment, at this time, is, that the queen's intimacy and present conversation leans only to those who are enemies to all that are most useful to the public service. Now this does not only create endless jealousies of one another, among those who are best inclined; but it makes others, who are willing to support the government, and are friends to the administration, uncertain to whom they should apply, or upon whom they shall depend. This is certainly, as well as I am able to describe it, our present condition; and I know nothing so capable of remedying it, as your being here, whose authority, when it appeared plainly, would be of so much weight as to extinguish much of this uneasiness, if not remedy the whole.

" But I give you the trouble of all this, rather to acquit myself in opening freely my thoughts to you, than with a view that you can be at liberty,

just now, to comply with what I both wish and want so much. However, when you come to the Hague, things may turn so that even the States may think it more necessary for you to be here than there, at least not to constrain your own or your friends' desires. In case, therefore, of any room for your speedy coming over, I could not be at quiet, till I had endeavoured to shew you nothing is of more consequence."

The numerous difficulties, which Godolphin experienced in conducting the government, drew from him querulous complaints concerning the irksomeness of his situation, to which he gave vent in his letters; and his complaints were re-echoed by his friend and colleague.

After regretting the absence of the duke, he observes, in one of his letters, dated Jan. 10.—

"I don't use to trouble you with complaints of my own circumstances, but so much advantage is taken of your absence, and I suffer so much, that I must give myself the vent of saying, the life of a slave in the galleys, is paradise in comparison of mine: but at first the length of the campaign would not let you come, afterwards the States would not let you come, and now God Almighty won't let you. So I must yield to fate."

Reply of the Duke.

"*Brussels, Jan.* 10.—I am extremely concerned at the latter part of yours, and I beg of you to do me the justice to believe, that if any thing in my power, though never so hazardous, could give you ease, I should with pleasure do it. I can easily believe your being tired with business,

and the great desire you have of enjoying quietness, by my own inclinations; for though I meet with here all the marks of friendship and approbation of what I have done; yet I am so desirous of retiring, that nothing but my duty to the queen, and friendship to you, could make me resolve going through the trouble of this war. This has been a very laborious campaign, but I am sensible the next will be more troublesome; for most certainly the enemy will venture, and do their utmost to get the better of us; but I trust in the Almighty that he will protect and give success to our just cause."

And again, Feb. 21. * * * * "If lord Sunderland's news-lettter be true, I should hope the king of France were in earnest, and then there would be a peace, which, upon all accounts, I long for, being extremely weary of the life I am obliged to live; for my spirit is so broke, that I am become fit for nothing else but a lazy, quiet life, which I prefer before all the pleasures of this world."

Nor were these the only discouragements which Marlborough and Godolphin experienced. Instead of being gratified by the promotion of their chiefs, the whigs were not only offended with the reluctant compliance of the queen, but, as before, made the attainment of one object the prelude to the acquisition of another. Lord Halifax, in particular, considered his services as treated with unmerited neglect, and resumed his claims for the office of joint plenipotentiary at the congress, which was shortly expected to be held for the negotiation of peace. He was naturally irritated at

the secret opposition which Marlborough and Godolphin had already made to his appointment, and with the previous promise to lord Townshend; but he hoped to gain his object by the support of his party, and gave vent to the most splenetic effusions against the general and the treasurer. In a letter to the duchess he expatiated on his services, and the slights he had experienced from them both; and in a conversation with Godolphin, when on his way to thank the queen for the appointment of his brother, he uttered the most violent invectives against the duke, to whom he ascribed all the disappointments which he had encountered.

His cause was supported by the other members of his party, but by none more strenuously than by Sunderland, who, with his characteristic vehemence, re-echoed the complaints against his father-in-law, and did not spare even the duchess herself.

The alienation to which these sentiments gave rise, was so strongly manifested towards lord Godolphin and the duchess, as to awaken in them the suspicion, that some of the whigs were covertly paying court to the new favourite. The impression was strengthened by a haughty overture from Halifax, in which, after professing his readiness to support the government, he appeared rather to exact submission, than to solicit confidence. "If your grace," he observes, in a letter to the duchess, "thinks it of any service, I give you full power to answer both those noble lords, that I am desirous to serve them in every thing, and will certainly go along with them, in all things that

are not contrary to my principles, and the good of my country. If the lord treasurer has a mind to speak with freedom to me, I will return it, with great sincerity and affection; but if he has a better opinion of other sort of notions, I will give him no trouble in forcing him to hear me."

Godolphin was deeply mortified by the studied insult conveyed in this epistle. "I beg leave to return you," he wrote to the duchess, "not by the post, but by the first safe hand, the letter you sent me from lord Halifax, because it ought to be kept, in the first place, as a curiosity, and next, because whoever could write such a letter, in his present circumstances, may hereafter give such provocation, that one would not but have it in one's power to shew so much impertinence under his own hand. When I have said this, I must own I think the impertinence greater to me than to you; but I shall not take any notice of it to him, nor ever make any court to him for his assistance, which I see by the letter he expects; but let him have his full swing with Mr. Harley and his friends, whom, for seven years together, he has called enemies to the government, rather than not ruin those who have done all that was possible for men to do to oblige him." *

The contemptuous reserve and insulting reproaches of the whig chiefs were still more deeply felt, and more warmly resented by the duchess than by Godolphin. In the height of indignation at their ingratitude, she forgot her darling predi-

* Lord Godolphin to the duchess, Monday night, at 6, probably written in the beginning of November.

lections, and professed an utter disdain of those party distinctions, for which she had sacrificed her own tranquillity, and the favour of her sovereign. In her correspondence with her husband she now depicted the whig chiefs in the same exaggerated colours, which she had hitherto applied to the tories. She described Somers as repulsive and disrespectful, and Halifax as vain, ambitious, and petulant; but in adverting to the conduct of Sunderland, she could find no terms sufficiently strong to express her abhorrence.

The communications of the treasurer and the duchess augmented the chagrin of Marlborough, at the continued failure of all his attempts to conciliate the whigs. Although he expressed his full conviction, that a strict union between the queen and the whigs was necessary for the welfare of England, he at the same time testified his displeasure at the doubts which their leaders entertained of his sincerity, and at the violence with which they pursued their object. We accordingly trace in his correspondence the language of smothered disappointment, strongly contrasted with the tone of affected indifference and resignation. Indeed it awakens our regret, to find a man of his powerful mind and political experience so easily ruffled, and uttering bitter invectives against the chiefs of the party on whom he was obliged to depend. But while he acrimoniously inveighs against Halifax, Sunderland, and Orford, he does full justice to the temper and good sense of Somers.

But the change of sentiment in a wife whom he was so anxious to conciliate, compensated for

many of his other perplexities. Hitherto her excessive partiality to the whigs had exposed him to repeated rebukes, for his apparent lukewarmness; but he now looked forward to more peace and congeniality of opinion in their future intercourse; since she seemed to accord with him in an utter dislike of mere political connections, and to consider both parties as equally domineering. These sentiments frequently occur in his letters, and we find him exulting in the hope that their domestic harmony would no longer be interrupted. Indeed, although the duchess occasionally relapsed into her habitual prejudices, he at least enjoyed a temporary respite from her importunities and sarcastic reflections.

Giving implicit credit to the suspicions of the treasurer and the duchess, that some of the whig chiefs were tampering with Mrs. Masham and Harley, he affects not only perfect indifference, but even satisfaction at the report; and although the limits of our work will not permit us to publish all his letters to the duchess at this interesting period, we cannot avoid giving a few extracts, which will shew the poignancy of his feelings at the increasing ascendancy of Harley and Mrs. Masham, as well as at the warmth and intemperate conduct of Halifax and Sunderland.

To the Duchess.

"*Nov.* 28. * * * * I wish with all my heart that matters may be settled so as to give content, as I am of opinion that England can't be safe but by a right understanding between the queen and the whigs. I am pleased at what you

write, that the lord treasurer has reason to believe, that some of the whigs are making up to Mrs. Masham; for I hope you are of my mind, that when England is safe, I had rather any body should govern than I. * * * * *

"What you say of lord Halifax, I have believed for a long time. If he had no other fault but his unreasonable vanity, that alone would be capable of making him guilty of any fault. For God's sake do not endeavour to hinder any body making their interest with Mrs. Masham, but agree with me in contemning any thing that others may think vexes me; for I swear to you solemnly that your love and quiet I prefer to all the greatness of this world, and had rather live a private life, than be the greatest man England ever had. I do not wonder, nor shall be much troubled at any thing Mr. Harley may say of me, for I shall desire nobody's friendship; but that my actions shall speak for me, which shall be governed by the understanding God has given me to what I shall judge best for the interest of England. Yours of the 2d of this month, O. S., which gives me an account of all things going on well in England, gives me an entire content of mind."

"*Jan.* 7.—I find by yours of the 17th, that Mrs. Masham does not think it worth while to keep any measures with me and those I love. I can't help flattering myself, that if it were possible to make the queen sensible of her malice, she would not suffer it; but I am afraid it is very difficult to persuade her to see any thing which Mrs. Masham would not have her believe, so that patience and

peace must be the cure. My real intentions are to be as quiet as is possible. I do not mean by that to quit the employment, but to serve my queen and country to the best of my understanding, without being either minister or favourite."

"*Hague, Jan.* 16. * * * I find by yours of the 22d of last month that lord Sunderland was indisposed; and the concern he had for what he thought might give me pleasure. I desire you will return him my thanks, and at the same time assure him that I am not desirous that any thing should be altered that might give disadvantage, or trouble to my friends; for I shall esteem myself happy if England be safe, and that I may have leave of living quiet with you. I shall always wish happiness to the queen, but I must have some time for myself, which could not be, if I had not taken the firm resolution of having no ambition, nor desire of favour."

"*Brussels, Feb.* 4. * * * * The assurances you give in yours of the 14th of January, of being of my mind as to parties, have given me all the hopes imaginable of future happiness: at the same time I assure you that I think the principles of the whigs are for the good of England, and that if the tories had the power, they would not only destroy England, but also the liberties of Europe. I shall always govern my actions by joining with such as are for the good of England, but will never be a slave to either party, and consequently not expect favour from either.

* * * * *

"As to my being uneasy at the changes that

have been made, they are very unjust, for I have the vanity to think that some letters which I wrote to the queen were of use. Lord Sunderland must be distracted, if he can have a thought of hurting or disobliging you and me, for the satisfaction of lord Halifax. You should speak plainly and kindly to him. I shall do it, when I come home, and I do with all my heart hope that lord Somers, the duke of Devonshire, lord Townshend, and the duke of Newcastle, will be reasonable."

"*Brussels, Feb.* 7. — As to the compliments I desired might have been made to lord Sunderland, it was upon what you wrote; but you may be sure that I shall neither desire nor make any, when you have so much reason to be dissatisfied, as you must have, when you call his designs monstrous. If lord Halifax and lord Sunderland are so extravagant, be assured that you will find others unreasonable, which will at last tire those who now serve, and then Mrs. Masham will be able to bring the queen into what scheme she pleases, which will be that of hurting the whigs; but I agree with you that lord Halifax has no other principle but his ambition; so that he would put all in distraction, rather than not gain his point. But the behaviour of lord Sunderland looks to me like madness, for it is impossible for him to have a thought of being tolerably well with Mrs. Masham. I have marked two lines in the inclosed letter, by which you may see he apprehends all things are like to go wrong. Pray let nobody know of the letter but the lord treasurer."

"*Feb.* 13. * * * * I desire you will say

all that you can think reasonable from me to lord Wharton, and I do, with all my heart, wish that lord Somers would always follow his own good sense, by which he would serve both his queen and country. But I fear you will, on many occasions, be sensible of his giving way to the violence of lord Halifax and lord Sunderland; for parties are governed much more by passion and violence than by reason. The duke of Devonshire is certainly a very honest man, but lord Orford has too much power with him. Walpole, who I agree is a very honest man, may be of use in keeping of the duke of Devonshire and lord Townshend in good-humour. I believe the duke of Somerset is a friend to you and me, but his ill judgment and great desire of having credit with the queen, will make him both troublesome, and do hurt; but whilst in the world we must bear with such uneasinesses."

CHAPTER 78.

1708—1709.

Private negotiations for a treaty of peace between France and Holland.—Communications on the subject to Marlborough. — His correspondence with the treasurer. — His anxiety for a greater augmentation of troops. — Returns to England.—Parliamentary proceedings.—Act of grace.—His anxiety at the alienation of the queen, and the change of popular opinion. — Resolution of the whigs to place lord Orford at the head of the admiralty. — Increasing perplexities of Marlborough.—Continuation of the negotiation in Holland.—Instructions for Marlborough in the conduct of the negotiation.

One of the principal motives which induced Marlborough to prolong his stay on the continent was, his desire to watch the progress of the negotiations, now pending between France and the States.

Since the failure of the proposal made to open a public treaty with the Maritime Powers, through the elector of Bavaria, the king of France had regarded all attempts to lure them jointly into a peace as nugatory, and therefore became doubly anxious to gain some individual member of the grand alliance. He accordingly made many secret overtures to those chiefs of the dutch republic, who were inclined to peace, affecting a readiness to

relinquish Spain and the Indies, with the Milanese and the Netherlands, provided he could obtain the kingdom of the Two Sicilies for his grandson. With this proposal, he coupled the offer of a satisfactory barrier on the side of the Netherlands, and great commercial advantages, concessions which he was well aware would weigh with a timid and interested people like the dutch. While, however, he thus amused his partisans in Holland, he applied to the emperor, through the mediation of the pope, offering to yield to the archduke Charles the spanish territories in Italy, with the Netherlands, provided Philip should be allowed to retain Spain and the Indies.

The duplicity which these contradictory offers evinced, and the apprehension that some member of the alliance might be tempted to sacrifice the general good to private views, doubtless induced the whigs to propose the unexpected declaration, which pledged the british parliament to continue the war, till the whole spanish monarchy was restored to the house of Austria. This declaration did not, as was expected, deter the dutch from their private intrigues. On the contrary, the pacific party continued to tamper with the french agents, and laboured to impress their countrymen with the opinion, that France was sufficiently humbled, and that it was impolitic to prosecute the war, for the advantage of other powers, since they were already assured of those acquisitions, which they deemed necessary for their own security.

This sentiment was not confined to the partisans of France alone, but actuated in a greater or less

degree, even those who were most zealous for the connection with England, from a conviction that their country was unable to support, much longer, the burthens of a protracted contest. In these circumstances, means were found to continue an intercourse, which was no less advantageous to France, than detrimental to the common cause. Petcum, a meddling minister of the duke of Holstein, and Bergueick, the spanish intendant of the Netherlands, were successively employed in these negotiations; and found co-operators in Buys, pensionary of Amsterdam, and Vanderdussen, member of the secret council and pensionary of * Gouda. In addition to these clandestine overtures, more direct and explicit propositions were made, by means of Menager, an opulent merchant and able negotiator, and Rouillé, president of the parliament of Paris, who had formed intimate connections with many considerable persons in Holland. The effect of these overtures was, a strong attempt among the pacific party to bring the rest of the States into a disposition to accede to a partition of the spanish monarchy between the two rival candidates.

This secret negotiation was not only disclosed to Marlborough, but strenuous efforts were made by Buys and his friends, to obtain his approbation of their proceedings.

On his return to the Hague from Brussels, he was visited on the 16th of January by Buys and Pancrass, president burgomaster of Amsterdam.

* Mem. de Torcy, v. i. p. 229.

They confidentially imparted to him the proposals of France, which had been communicated only to the chief magistrates of that city, stating, that their pensionary would be ruined, should it be known that he had received such overtures without laying them before the States. They represented that they had maintained this reserve till they should know the duke's opinion, in hopes of obtaining his concurrence; and, at the same time, added, that no proposals should be received, without the approbation of the queen.

The overtures from France were these: that some persons of trust and confidence should be sent privately, with such proposals of peace, as would be agreeable to all the allies, with previous assurances that Spain, the Indies, Milan, with the Low Countries, should be no obstacle, and that a secure barrier should be granted to the dutch; that, finally, as a proof of his sincerity, Louis would not endeavour to create jealousy among the allies, but would give just satisfaction to each of them, upon their reasonable pretensions. Buys and his colleague expatiated on the low condition to which Holland was reduced by the burthens of the war, and urged the necessity of peace; though at the same time they repeated their declaration, that no measures should be taken without the concurrence of the queen, and that an answer to that purpose had been returned by Petcum to Torcy.

On this delicate occasion, Marlborough acted with his customary prudence. Conscious that he was accused of prolonging the war from interested motives, he avoided exposing himself to the dan-

gerous responsibility, which he must have incurred, by the absolute rejection of these offers. He therefore declined giving any opinion, but requested their permission to lay the overtures before the queen for her instructions, through the lord treasurer, under the strictest pledge of secrecy, adding, that her majesty had no greater desire than to promote a solid and durable peace. Having obtained their acquiescence, he transmitted the proposal to the treasurer for the royal consideration.* He recommended also that these overtures should be concealed from the dutch, who were so desirous of peace, that, for the sake of obtaining it, they would willingly agree to a partition treaty. But he enforced the necessity of making some declaration to the republic, relative to a plan of mutual co-operation, to prevent a schism in the grand alliance.

This interesting negotiation became a prominent subject in the correspondence between the general and the treasurer, and created an occasional discordance of opinion which had not occurred at any preceding period. Marlborough was apprehensive that the king of France was not yet sufficiently humbled, to agree to the terms which the allies were entitled to demand, and consequently represented the expediency of obtaining such an augmentation of force as might enable him to dictate the conditions of peace; while the treasurer imagined that the threats and preparations of the

* Letters from the duke of Marlborough to lord Godolphin, Jan. 16. and 17.

enemy were merely designed for intimidation, and was accordingly anxious to confine the military preparations to the narrowest limit, which his opinion of the state and means of France led him to deem sufficient.

In the course of their correspondence, Marlborough appealed continually to the advice of the whig chiefs in general, and to lord Somers in particular, by whom the treasurer was principally directed. He also adhered to the opinion, that an honourable peace was to be obtained, rather by action in the field, than by negotiation in the cabinet; and that as the french were preparing to increase their army in the Netherlands, it became necessary to augment the confederate forces in a still greater proportion.

Unfortunately, in addition to the difficulty of obtaining such an augmentation of british troops as he deemed necessary, he had the mortification to be informed of a resolution in the british cabinet to send seven regiments, which were quartered at Antwerp, to Spain, the loss of which would have too considerably diminished the army in Flanders. Against this resolution the general warmly appealed to the treasurer, and in one of his letters strongly observed, —

"*Brussels, Feb.* 7. — I received last night the favour of yours of the 18th of the last month, in which you continue being of the opinion that the seven battalions at Antwerp should be sent to England. I can say no more on that subject. You will see what the inclosed letter says as to the designs of France. As they draw their troops

from all parts to strengthen their army in this country, if we at the same time must be obliged to leave our troops where they cannot be of much use, there can be no doubt but at length my lord Haversham will be gratified by our being beaten, for a great superiority at last must undo us. I am of your opinion, that one reason for the enemy's marching their troops from all parts so early into this country is, in hopes that may incline the dutch to hearken to peace. But I also am of opinion that, if that fails, their great superiority will incline them to venture a battle."

"*Brussels, Feb.* 11.—I know not how you may reason in England, but I am fully persuaded that it is of the last consequence to have the troops of Wirtemberg, and the seven regiments, serve in this country the next campaign; for with those, all the troops that we may be able to get, for the sum of money given by parliament for the troops of augmentation, will fall very short of the number of troops the enemy will have in this country. Is it possible that men of good sense, and that mean sincerely well to the common cause, can be in the least doubt that if the enemy make their greatest, and, indeed, their only effort in this country, but that we must do the same, or expect to be beaten? which I pray God Almighty to prevent, for that would be a fatal blow.

"If any orders have been sent me for the march of these seven regiments, I do most earnestly beg you will once more lay before her majesty, and the lords of the cabinet council, my apprehensions."

This spirited remonstrance had its due effect,

and though the seven regiments were assigned by parliament for the service of Spain, her majesty consented that they should be recruited in Flanders, and not be removed, as long as their presence was necessary; and that, at least, the duke might rely on their service at the commencement of the campaign. He likewise had the satisfaction of obtaining the consent of the States and the queen for a reinforcement of the 4000 wirtembergers alluded to in the above letter, who were to be drawn from the Rhine. Yet with this additional force, he continued to regret that the confederate army in the Netherlands would be still inferior to that of the enemy, though he should be under the necessity of acting offensively, as the only means of extorting an honourable peace from France.

"I shall be sure," he writes to the treasurer, (Brussels, Feb. 13.) "to observe your directions as to peace, but I am far from thinking the king of France so low as he is thought in England, and, as I am afraid, will appear very quickly; for it is hardly to be credited the reports the people make me, whom I employ on the frontier, of the vast numbers of troops they have in all their towns, and that all their villages and farm-houses between the Sambre and Meuse are full of their horse. I do agree with you, that they may flatter themselves, that numbers of troops may intimidate, and consequently incline the States to hearken to such terms as they would not, if we had the superiority; but that which alarms me is, that I do not observe that they are very pressing for an opportunity to explain what they have offered, but are very vigi-

lant in making their magazines, and obliging their troops to march in a very cruel season. I wish, with all my heart, I may be mistaken, but I beg this may not be seen by any body but the queen; for no measures can farther be taken than we are doing. For if they will venture, we must, let their numbers be what they will; and I hope God will, as he has hitherto done, protect and bless us with success."

And again, Feb. 14. "Since mine of yesterday, by Mr. Abercromby, I have received yours of the 25th, by the way of Holland. By it I find we differ in opinion, as to the intentions of the enemy. I wish you may judge right, but I fear it may prove otherwise. When I have the happiness of being with you, I shall be better able to inform you of my observations and reasons for my opinion."

After delivering his sentiments in these strong terms, he deferred the final settlement of the conditions for a general pacification, until his arrival in England, for which country he was preparing to embark.

Such was the doubtful and troubled state of affairs when he took his departure from the Hague, not with the exultation which his successes might have inspired, but with melancholy reflections on the past, and forebodings no less melancholy for the future. He embarked at Ostend on the 25th of February, old style, and after a tedious and dangerous passage, reached London on the 1st of March.

The duke of Marlborough made his appearance

in the upper house on the ensuing day, and on taking his seat was welcomed with warm congratulations. The chancellor, after expressing the thanks of the peers for his great and eminent services, concluded by observing, "I shall not be thought to exceed my present commission, if, being thus led to contemplate the mighty things your grace has done for us, I cannot but conclude with acknowledging, with all gratitude, the providence of God in raising you up to be an instrument of so much good, in so critical a juncture, when it was so much wanted."

In the usual and modest style of his replies, he answered, "My lords, I hope you will do me the justice to believe, there are very few things that could give me more satisfaction than the favourable approbation of my service by this house, and I beg leave to assure your lordships, it shall be the constant endeavour of my life to deserve the continuation of your good opinion."

As it was imagined that Marlborough was the bearer of some proposals for peace, an address had been previously carried in the house of lords, on the motion of the whig peers, that the queen would be pleased to take care, at the conclusion of the war, to continue and establish a good and firm friendship with the allies, and that the french king might be obliged to own her majesty's title, and the protestant succession; it was farther requested that effectual methods should be taken for removing the pretender out of the french dominions.

This address was sent down to the commons, who added an amendment, proposed by secretary Boyle,

requiring as a condition of peace the demolition of the fortifications and harbour of Dunkirk. Such a condition was perfectly in unison with the sentiments of the treasurer, and Marlborough had the satisfaction of giving his vote in favour of the address. *

During his short stay in England, he was personally engaged in few of the parliamentary transactions; and, consequently, for the proceedings of the period, we shall refer to our national historians. One act, however, which was proposed during his stay, and passed soon after his departure, deserves particular notice, not only for its relative importance, but for its effect, as it regarded himself and the treasurer, as well as many distinguished characters of the time. This was the fulfilment of the promise given in the speech, at the opening of parliament by an act of grace, the first which had been granted in the reign of Anne, and the most general since the Revolution; because it comprehended every species of treason, except such as were committed on the high seas. It was proposed by lord Sunderland on the 20th of April, and passed in both houses with the usual forms. This act could not be otherwise than agreeable to Godolphin and Marlborough, and to the numerous persons of all ranks and descriptions, who, since the abdication of James, had carried on a correspondence, either by letter or message, with the Stuart family, and who had been held in perpetual anxiety, lest by some unforeseen change of politics,

* Journals, March 3.

the sympathy which they had shewn toward their dethroned sovereign, should be visited with the heaviest vengeance of the law.

After the act of grace no material business occurred, and the session of parliament was closed by commission, on the 21st of April, with the usual formalities, and with the appearance of perfect cordiality between the sovereign and the legislature.

During the continuance of Marlborough in England, he had the mortification to experience the same coldness which the queen had already manifested towards the treasurer, and to observe aggravated symptoms of her immoderate aversion to the whigs. He had also the chagrin to witness the increasing influence of Mrs. Masham, and the eagerness with which persons of all ranks and distinctions hastened to pay their court to the new object of royal affection. He was no less grieved to observe the favour of his wife declining in the same proportion, to learn that her interviews with the queen were short, formal, and ceremonious, and to behold the herd of courtiers, withdrawing the homage which they had long been accustomed to pay to her, as the reigning favourite. But a no less painful feeling was awakened by the conviction, that he as well as Godolphin were still the objects of jealousy to the whigs, and that a cordial union with them, on which the safety of all depended, was of doubtful and distant accomplishment. He found also that the whigs were meditating to extend their influence, by placing lord Orford at the head of the admiralty, and

he foresaw that, in the accomplishment of this object, he should again be driven to the unwelcome task of combating the prejudices and antipathies of the queen, and should be exposed to acrimonious reproaches, should the success of his efforts not keep pace with the impatient wishes of the party.

Finally, he had the melancholy reflection to perceive that his victories began to lose their splendour in the eyes of a capricious public; that he was accused more than ever of prolonging the contest from selfish motives; that the sovereign herself had ceased to take an interest in the triumph of her arms; and that impatience of the public burdens, and even the want of foreign luxuries, outweighed, in the consideration of many, all regard for national liberty, and the safety of their country. *

Meanwhile the negotiations in Holland began to assume a more regular and definitive shape.

Hitherto Louis had rather consulted the dictates of his pride and honour, than the sentiments or welfare of his subjects; but France was now reduced to the extremity of wretchedness and despondency. Most of the strong towns on the frontier were in the possession of the allies, while the interior provinces, exhausted and depopulated, were threatened with instant invasion. Domestic misery contributed to aggravate the sense of public misfortune. The people, who had already experienced the privations arising from scanty harvests

* Cunningham, v. ii. p. 220.

and the waste of war, were menaced with all the horrors of famine, in consequence of the severity of the recent season, which had destroyed the fruits of the earth in the germ. Numerous insurrections broke forth in different quarters, and the public ferment was increased by the effects of religious persecution. The highways were infested with banditti; while in the larger towns, the fury of the populace was restrained only by the presence of that military force which was required for the defence of the frontier. Every invention for raising new taxes had failed; and a forced circulation of fictitious money, which had hitherto furnished resources to the government, had sapped the foundations of commerce, and destroyed the credit of the nation abroad.

In these deplorable circumstances, a clamour for peace was raised by a powerful party, at the head of whom was the duke of Burgundy, presumptive heir to the throne. They re-echoed the complaints which had been heard in the distant provinces, and disclosed those unwelcome truths, which fear and severity had hitherto withheld from the royal ear.

Baffled in all his vast designs, the french monarch had no resource, except to open a new negotiation, which, if successful, would relieve him from his multiplied embarrassments, and, even if it failed, might induce the allies to slacken their efforts, and encourage his own subjects to bear more cheerfully the extremities to which they were reduced. With this view he dispatched the president Rouillé to Holland, with powers to offer

such terms as he hoped would be accepted by the allies.

The french agent was met, on the part of the dutch government, by Buys and Vanderdussen, who were commissioned to receive and report his proposals. Their conferences were first held at Moerdyke, and afterwards at Worden; and the result is thus communicated to the duke of Marlborough, by general Palmes, who derived his information from the pensionary.

"M. Rouillé made offers of giving up Spain, the Indies, and the Milanese to king Charles. Upon which, being asked what instructions he had concerning the rest of Italy, he answered, as to the islands, his master was ready to give them, but would insist upon Naples and Sicily, for his grandson. The Low Countries he was willing to give up, as at the peace of Ryswick, and join to them Menin; '*mais pour Lille, que son maître s'en de-*' *mettroit mal volontiers,*' but would consent to give up Ypres in lieu of it. As to the empire, his master would restore every place to the state it was in, after the peace of Ryswick. The answer of the deputies was, that they could not enter into any treaty, but upon the foot of what was proposed after the battle of Ramilies; that they had treaties with their respective allies, and would not give any answer to these proposals, till satisfaction was given to the said treaties."

Although these proposals were vague and unsatisfactory, the overture was not peremptorily rejected; and Rouillé departed for Paris, to procure farther instructions. Accordingly, Eugene was

remanded from Vienna, and was soon afterwards followed by count Zinzendorf, as imperial plenipotentiary. At the same time, Marlborough was directed to return to the Hague, and charged with the following instructions.

" As the president Rouillé has held several conferences with certain deputies of the republic, which have excited alarm and jealousies among the confederates, the duke of Marlborough is enjoined to declare to the pensionary the opinion of the queen, that no negotiation for peace should be concluded with France, until the preliminaries are adjusted between England and the States. He is to announce her hope, that the States will concur in her sentiments and those of her people, so often expressed in the addresses of parliament, that no peace can be safe or honourable, unless the whole spanish monarchy be restored to the house of Austria. That the french king shall be obliged to acknowledge her title and the succession to the crown; the pretender be removed from France, and the fortifications and harbour of Dunkirk be destroyed. He is likewise to announce her majesty's desire, that other preliminaries should be required for the security and interest of the States, particularly a barrier, for which a treaty had been so long depending, and of which the queen was willing to become a guarantee, not doubting but the States would, in like manner, guaranty the protestant succession. He is to endeavour to engage the rest of the allies to be also guarantees."

He was instructed to stipulate, that if the preliminaries were not agreed to before the opening

of the campaign, the allies were to consider themselves at liberty to propose additional articles; and he was to inform the pensionary of the queen's desire, that at the conclusion of the war, a firm alliance and friendship should be formed between all the confederates.

CHAPTER 79.

1709.

Marlborough returns to England, and receives fresh instructions.— Lord Townshend appointed joint plenipotentiary. — They arrive at the Hague.— Renewal of the negotiations.—Conferences with Torcy.—The pensionary delivers the preliminaries, in the name of the allies.—Torcy declines signing them, and repairs to Versailles. — The king of France refuses his ratification. — Vindication of Marlborough from the charge of obstructing the peace.

On the 9th of April, Marlborough reached the Hague, where he found Eugene, who had arrived on the preceding day. They immediately held conferences with the pensionary, Buys, Vanderdussen, and the heads of the government; and after a mature discussion, the terms offered by the french agent were declared inadmissible, for the ground of a treaty. Orders were accordingly issued for hastening the military preparations, and the two dutch agents returned to Worden, to communicate the result of the meeting to Rouillé. As, however, he deprecated any further decision, till he had received more explicit instructions from Versailles, his application was granted, and he was suffered to wait the return of his messenger.

Soon after his arrival at the Hague, he communicated his instructions to pensionary Heinsius, intimating, at the same time, the great confidence

which the queen and the allies reposed in his integrity and zeal. The pensionary having expressed his apprehensions that France would never submit to terms so severe, the duke replied, that he could not depart from a single article of his instructions, and testified hopes that the extreme distress of France would oblige her monarch to accept any conditions which the allies, if united, would demand. But the pensionary expatiated on the still greater distresses of Holland, and the inability of the dutch to carry on the war. He deplored the fatal consequences which must ensue, should the negotiations prove abortive; and insinuated, that the people would lay the whole blame of the failure on England. "I will use my endeavours," he added, "that no steps shall be taken, but what are agreeable to the queen and the allies; but I recommend you, strongly, not to impart any of your instructions, at the first conference, but what may concern the barrier and the protestant succession, for the purpose of gaining time, till the return of the french courier."

This opinion of a statesman so friendly to England, and so well inclined to the principles of the grand alliance, will prove the extreme difficulty which Marlborough had to encounter; and he soon afterwards perceived still stronger symptoms of the dissatisfaction prevailing among the other members of the dutch republic, lest the negotiation should be broken off, by insisting on a condition so impracticable as the restoration of the whole spanish manarchy to the house of Austria within two months. He had the satisfaction, how-

ever, to be convinced that the "solid part of the dutch government were inclined to prosecute the war," till a good and lasting peace should be obtained. He was gratified likewise with the repeated declarations of the pensionary, that no step should be taken without the concurrence of the queen and the other allies; and he states his conviction that a general opinion prevailed in Holland not to proceed to any treaty, without their participation. *

We have already seen, by the correspondence, the embarrassments which arose from the interminable disputes with the dutch republic on the subject of the barrier. At this period the difficulties increased; because the prospect of an approaching peace rendered the dutch impatient of further delay, and indicated the necessity of settling the barrier in the preliminaries, if England expected that the republic should agree to guaranty the protestant succession. As Marlborough disapproved their exorbitant demands, and particularly opposed the inclusion of Ostend and Dendermond among the towns of the barrier, he was unwilling to irritate the leading men by a formal refusal. He therefore maintained a cautious silence, and declined holding any conversation on the subject. This reserve offended several of the chiefs, and they threatened to send M. Buys to England, with a view to obtain from the cabinet a specific acknowledgment of their claims; a measure

* Letters from the duke to secretary Boyle and lord Godolphin, April 12th.

which would have been attended with considerable inconvenience, and which he had great difficulty in evading.

Meanwhile, Godolphin and the other members of the british cabinet were displeased with the apparent lukewarmness of the pensionary, and irritated at the dutch, who, while they advanced such extravagant demands for their own barrier, were unwilling to offend France by insisting on the rasure of Dunkirk, or by allowing equivalent advantages to England. The letters of the treasurer on this occasion are filled with violent invectives against the selfishness and obstinacy of the dutch republic; and he enjoined Marlborough to lose no time in laying before their government his full instructions on the subject of the proposed preliminaries. It required the greatest discretion and judgment to reconcile these conflicting interests.

Marlborough was also become extremely unpopular among many in Holland, from a suspicion that he would accept the government of the Low Countries, and the recent offer of king Charles to grant it for life increased their jealousy. Nor was it easy to quiet these alarms, because he had not sent a positive refusal, and because he was strongly solicited by lord Somers not to decline the offer, in hopes that some favourable circumstances might occur, to quiet the apprehensions of the dutch. Even when he had received information from the lord treasurer, that the queen left the matter to his own decision, he still deferred his final refusal; lest Charles, or the court of Vienna, should appoint a person who would not be acceptable to the

other allies. The solemn asseverations of the duke, that he would not accept the government, came therefore too late to allay the ferment, and, as he himself allows, weakened his influence over the minds of a people scarcely less repugnant to the ascendancy of England, than to that of * France. This jealousy had excited great murmurs, and was supposed by many to have induced a considerable party in Holland to listen to the overtures of the French monarch, and to clamour for the continuance of the negotiation. †

At length the dutch government formally delivered a list of the places which they required for their barrier, and which Marlborough transmitted to the treasurer in a letter, bearing date April 19th.

"The deputation of the States-General were with me yesterday above two hours: the whole time was spent on the subject of the barrier. After I had given them all the assurances I thought necessary, of the intentions and inclinations of the queen and english nation, of concurring with them in what might be reasonable for their barrier, I did endeavour to cure them of any jealousy they might have of my being particularly concerned. I hope it has had a good effect with them. However, I have done all I can, and shall do so to keep them in good humour, if possible. The inclosed is what they desire for their barrier; it encloses what might be thought a great kingdom. I hope to persuade them from some of it, so that I beg very few may see it; but when I have

* Letter to lord Godolphin, Hague, April 16.

† Abrégé de l'Histoire de la Holland, p. 1098.

done all that may be in my power, I shall then send it to the secretary, so that it may come regularly to her majesty, and the cabinet council.

" M. Rouillé's messenger returned last night; but I am told that he desires two days to decypher his dispatch; so that Tuesday will be the soonest I shall be able to give you an account of this matter. This is so critical a time, that I dare not be of any opinion; but I tremble when I think that a very little impatience may ruin a sure game."

In announcing the receipt of this list, Godolphin replies with a degree of unusual asperity, in a letter dated April 12–23. " I must now acknowledge the favour of yours of the 19th, with the list of towns proposed for the barrier, by which one may observe very little consideration for king Charles, any more than for the queen. I hope they will think fit to have a little more regard to both, before the conclusion of this affair; and one can't help admiring the great modesty of the States, in asking all those terms for themselves, when, at the same time, they make a difficulty to have the single town of Dunkirk demolished, at the instance of the queen. * * * * * *

" You call it in your letter by a very civil term, *a little impatience*, which you say you tremble to think may spoil a sure game; but I confess I look upon that word impatience to be a very gentle one in this case, and I wish it may not prove a determined resolution of gratifying their enemies, and gaining advantages for themselves, at the expense of their allies."

At this moment new perplexities arose; memo-

rials poured in from all the allied courts, exhorting the queen to support their respective pretensions, at the approaching peace; and these memorials were transmitted to Marlborough, "for the sole purpose," as Godolphin observes, "of shewing to the States how indifferent a figure her majesty makes in this peace, and how very different from that which she has made during the whole course of the war."

Among these, we cannot omit to notice a very singular application from the court of Barcelona. King Charles, not satisfied with the entire monarchy of Spain, even required the restitution of Roussillon, and all the territories yielded at the peace of the Pyrennees; and he joined with the emperor in a strong remonstrance against the cession of the places which the dutch had required for their barrier. It was impossible that Marlborough could reconcile these jarring pretensions, and we cannot wonder therefore that he found great difficulty in adjusting such terms as were likely to be approved by all the contracting powers. He proceeded, however, in conforming himself to the strict tenour of his instructions.

On the 23d of April, he formally announced to the pensionary the specific articles of the preliminaries on which her majesty insisted; namely, the cession of the whole spanish monarchy to king Charles; the recognition of the protestant succession; the removal of the pretender from the french dominions, and the demolition of Dunkirk. He also informed the british government that he was preparing to make the declaration for these condi-

tions in the name of the queen, that prince Eugene would imitate his example in regard to the emperor's pretensions, and that the other foreign ministers would produce similar acts in the name of their respective sovereigns. In this letter to secretary Boyle, as well as in others to lord Godolphin, he intimates the prevalence of a general inclination in Holland for peace, and praises the conduct of the pensionary, who, on mature reflection, had expressed his determination to act in concurrence with England.

The peremptory resolution of the british cabinet on one hand, not to depart from the articles intended for the preliminaries, and on the other, the selfish disposition of the dutch government, threw him into an unusual embarrassment; and as the only means of arranging so delicate a transaction, he determined on a temporary return to England. He communicated his purpose in a letter to the treasurer *, adding, that he had not hitherto disclosed it to any one, but prince Eugene. †

During the presence of Marlborough in England, the subject of peace was amply discussed in the british cabinet; and, at his instance, and the recommendation of Somers, lord Townshend was associated with him in the office of plenipotentiary.

* Hague, April 24th.

† The biographers and historians have mostly erred in the date respecting the time of the duke's departure from the Hague. Lediard, Tindal, and the french biographer, assert that he arrived at the Hague on the 9th of April, and reimbarked on the 13th, N. S., whereas his letters from the Hague bear date as low as April 27th, and he was then on the point of embarking. Torcy more justly says, that he embarked for England towards the end of April, N. S. Vol. i. p. 324.

In addition to the former instructions, they were enjoined to insist, "that the towns and forts of Furnes, Ypres, Menin, Lille, Tournay, Condé, Valenciennes, and Maubeuge, be delivered up, at a treaty of peace, from France to king Charles, to be garrisoned as shall be hereafter settled."

To promote an honourable and lasting peace, they were authorised to induce the allies to conclude, without delay, a grand alliance, in which they should mutually guaranty their respective pretensions, to use all their endeavours that the french protestants should be restored to their civil and religious rights, and to prepare an advantageous treaty of commerce between England and France, in conformity with subsequent instructions. Lastly, the pensionary and members of the States were to be informed that the queen could not agree to a peace, unless Newfoundland and Hudson's Bay were restored.

To these, additional instructions were added, that if the revenues of the towns and territories, which were to form the barrier, should not be sufficient for the necessary expences, the plenipotentiaries should be authorised to consent to the addition of such farther sum or sums as should be deemed necessary, out of the income and revenues arising from the Spanish Netherlands. *

On the 18th of May, Marlborough and Townshend arrived at the Hague, and found that the negotiation had assumed a more favourable form.

* Additional instructions printed in the General Collection of Treaties, &c. v. ii. p. 479.

In consequence of the report transmitted by Rouillé, the king of France was alarmed with the prospect of an immediate rupture of the negotiation. He accordingly dispatched his secretary of state, the marquis of Torcy, with the hope that his character, as a confidential minister, would give greater weight to his mission; that he would be able either to lure or awe the States into a separate accommodation, or procure more favourable terms than the allies had hitherto appeared disposed to grant. This minister had reached the Hague soon after the departure of Marlborough, and with some difficulty induced the dutch government to consent to a renewal of the suspended negotiation. He accordingly held a conference with the two deputies, and proposed some changes in the terms already offered. The States, however, declared their resolution not to treat separately, and declined any decision, till they were apprised of the opinion of their allies, particularly the sentiments of the queen of England, by the duke of Marlborough, who was shortly expected.

The instructions with which the plenipotentiaries were charged, and the disposition which the british government evinced to gratify the States, in regard to their barrier, gave a more flattering aspect to the negotiation than it had assumed at the commencement, and full confidence seems to have been again restored on the great question of peace and war. On the very day after his arrival, Marlborough notified to lord Godolphin, with great exultation, that he had overcome the pensionary's objections, and prevailed on the dutch

commissioners to accede to the principal articles; and that he was not without hopes that the cession of Newfoundland to England would be admitted, adding, that the pretensions to Hudson's Bay would be settled by commissioners. He allowed that the most difficult part of the negotiation would be the article respecting the cessation of arms. After commending the friendly behaviour of the pensionary, he concluded, "M. de Torcy has offered so much, that I have no doubt it will end in a good peace." He observed also to his wife, in a letter of the same date, "every thing goes so well here, that there is no doubt of its ending in a good peace;" and, as if auguring the certainty of that happy event, he added, "but for some little time, it must not be spoken of. You must have in readiness the side-board of plate, and you must let the lord treasurer know, that since the queen came to the crown, I have not had either a canopy or chair of state, which now of necessity I must have, so the wardrobe should have immediate orders; and I beg you will take care to have it made so as that it may serve for part of a bed, when I have done with it here, which I hope will be by the end of this summer, so that I may enjoy your dear company in quiet, which is the greatest satisfaction I am capable of having. I have so great a head-ache that you will excuse my saying any more by this post."

The great difficulties, however, relative to the barrier, again nearly interrupted the good harmony which subsisted between the dutch and the other allies. These pretensions appeared so exorbitant,

that Eugene and Zinzendorf refused their assent, and it required all the influence of Marlborough to induce the dutch to moderate, or at least to suspend, some of their claims.

Having discussed the points at issue with the States, Marlborough and his associates commenced their diplomatic intercourse with the french minister, and after the usual visits of respect and ceremony, entered on the business separately or jointly, as circumstances occurred. Conferences followed on conferences, both public and private, and Torcy exerted the dexterity and blandishments for which he was distinguished. He was furnished with such powers as enabled him to display all the artifices of diplomacy, and supplied with considerable funds to corrupt the fidelity of those with whom his own eloquence, or the influence of his master, were unavailing. After having in vain attempted to gain over the dutch government, or to vanquish the opposition of the pensionary and imperial plenipotentiaries, he did not hesitate to address himself privately to Marlborough, and to make him the offer of an enormous bribe on the fulfilment of certain conditions. He pledged the word and honour of the king to remit him two millions of livres, if he could obtain the reserve of Naples and Sicily for his grandson; or even Naples alone, at the last extremity; or, if that could not be procured, the same gratification for the preservation of Dunkirk in its actual state, or even for that of Strasburg. He also increased his offer to four millions, if he could obtain the Two Sicilies,

or even Naples alone for Philip, and Strasburg, Dunkirk, and Landau, for France. *

In announcing these offers, Torcy took an opportunity to hint at the former correspondence of Marlborough with Berwick and the exiled family, with the evident hope that it would alarm him into compliance. The duke was doubtless much embarrassed by these covert insinuations; yet he parried the attack with the dexterity of a courtier, and the politeness of a gentleman. He testified profound respect for the king of France, and esteem for his nephew the duke of Berwick, and professed his desire to serve the son of a sovereign for whom he would have shed the last drop of his blood; but he received the indelicate proposal of a bribe with silent contempt, and whenever it was resumed, hastened to change the conversation. He was neither alarmed nor tempted by the artful proposals of the french plenipotentiary to recede from a single article of his instructions. He strenuously insisted, that no compensation would be granted to the duke of Anjou, and that no british minister would dare to propose the cession of Naples or Sicily to a french prince. He discouraged any hopes of obtaining the payment of the dowry to the exiled queen; nor did he less enforce the demand that the prince of Wales should be removed from France, adding, that he might fix his residence in any other country, and enjoy proper security and freedom. He dwelt also on the stupendous successes of the war, as an indication of

* Memoires de Torcy, vol. ii. p. 104—111.

providential interference; and to the same cause he ascribed the wonderful union that actuated the members of the grand alliance, and impelled eight nations to act and speak as one man. He therefore earnestly exhorted the french monarch to accept the proffered terms, as a means of preserving his country from inevitable destruction, and urged him not to flatter himself with the hope of exciting divisions among the allies, or of inducing them to depart a tittle from their demands. *

In the course of the public conferences, proposals and counter-proposals were made on both sides. The minor points were gradually conceded, or referred to future discussion; and, after labouring in vain to obtain some compensation for the duke of Anjou, Torcy reluctantly admitted the grand principle that the whole monarchy of Spain should be delivered to the house of Austria. The mode of this relinquishment, however, became the subject of warm and continued discussion, and was, in fact, still the point on which the negotiation turned. The allies required an unequivocal surrender, within a limited time, by insisting that Louis himself should induce his grandson to deliver up the whole monarchy; while the french minister protested against the demand, as impracticable, and derogatory to the feelings and honour of his

* We have described this conversation, as nearly as possible, in the very words of Torcy, that we may not seem to extenuate the conduct of Marlborough; but we must at the same time caution the reader that the account is given by a french minister to his sovereign, and, consequently, that we must expect the circumstances to be represented in the manner most pleasing to the person to whom it was addressed, and probably in the mode least honourable to the british general.

sovereign. He tendered several expedients, which he affected to regard as equivalent, but which were successively rejected by the allies, as insufficient or illusory, and tending to engage them in a separate contest on spanish ground, while France enjoyed the advantages of peace.

To terminate a discussion which appeared to be endless, and to bring the question to an immediate issue, the ministers of the allies entered into an engagement for the maintenance of their respective pretensions, and embodied their demands on France in a series of preliminaries, consisting of forty-four articles, embracing the principal points at issue, and establishing the mode for the unequivocal surrender of the whole spanish monarchy to the house of Austria, within two months. This ultimatum was formally delivered to the french minister by the pensionary of Holland, as an irrefragable proof that the dutch acted in full concurrence with England and the other allies.

The basis of these preliminaries was, the cession of the whole spanish monarchy to the house of Austria, and the acknowledgment of Charles as king of Spain and the Indies. No part of the spanish dominions was ever to be possessed by a prince of the house of Bourbon; and french subjects were not to be admitted to trade to the Spanish Indies. Finally, Louis was to restore all the towns and forts which he had either conquered or occupied in the Spanish Netherlands.

To secure the fulfilment of the article relative to the evacuation of the spanish monarchy, the duke of Anjou was to relinquish Spain and deliver up

Sicily, within two months; and should he refuse to consent, the french king was to withdraw his troops from Spain, and not only withhold his assistance, but enter into proper measures with the allies for giving effect to the proposed evacuation. He was likewise, at the same period, to put into the possession of the allies, Namur, Mons, Charleroi, Luxembourg, Condé, Tournay, Maubeuge, Nieuport, Furnes, and Ypres.

In favour of the States, France was to deliver up to them as a barrier, Furnes, Menin, Ypres, Warneton, Comines, Werwick, Paperingen, Lille, Condé, and Maubeuge. The dutch garrisons were likewise to remain in Huy, Liege, and Bonn, till otherwise agreed with the emperor and empire.

To England, Louis was to acknowledge the title of the queen and the protestant succession, raze Dunkirk, send the pretender out of France, and cede Newfoundland. He was likewise to settle a treaty of commerce between the two countries. Certain stipulations were made in favour of the emperor, empire, the duke of Savoy, and the other allies.

It was stipulated expressly, that if the whole monarchy was not delivered to Charles the third, within two months after the conclusion of the treaty, the cessation of arms, which was to take place on the ratification of the preliminaries, was to terminate. A general congress was appointed, at which the allies might make further demands. It was to begin on the 20th of June, and the ratification on the part of the king of France, the queen of Great Britain, and the Sates, was to be

announced on the 15th of June, and on the part of the emperor by the 1st of July. These preliminaries were regularly signed by the imperial and british plenipotentiaries, as well as by the pensionary and dutch commissioners, and delivered in form to the french secretary.

After ineffectually attempting to obtain some mitigation of the articles, Torcy publicly objected to the 37th and 39th, relative to the restoration of the whole spanish monarchy, within two months, and the limitation of the suspension of arms to the same period. But although he declared, that he had not full powers to sign such conditions, he testified his intention of proceeding to Paris with the hopes of prevailing on his royal master to ratify all the preliminaries. He likewise promised to send the king's final answer by the 4th of June; and Rouillé remained in Holland to continue the negotiation. His professions were considered as indicating a pacific disposition on the part of his sovereign, and his departure was hailed as the signal of approaching peace. All ranks exulted in the prospect of terminating this bloody contest, and none more than the general, who now deemed himself secure of that tranquil retirement for which he had long sighed in vain; and his correspondence at this period is strongly indicative of his own satisfaction and that of his friends, at the certain prospect of an approaching peace.

The disposition for peace which prevailed in Holland was equally general in England. All the friends of Marlborough, and the duchess in particular, circulated the most cheering reports that

peace was actually concluded. Letters of congratulation poured in from all quarters, lauding the dexterity and firmness which he had manifested in wielding the discordant interests of the grand alliance, and celebrating his success in negotiation, no less than his prowess in arms.

These elevated expectations were, however, soon dissipated, by the intelligence which arrived from the french court. Torcy, on his road to Versailles, was met by a messenger from the king, announcing his rejection of the preliminaries; and on his arrival, he imparted the communication in a letter to Eugene, which reached him on the 4th at Brussels. The same messenger arrived at the Hague on the 5th, and conveyed to Rouillé an order to notify the decision in form to the duke of Marlborough, as well as to the other plenipotentiaries. Notwithstanding this severe disappointment, the general still clung to the hopes of peace, and continued to regret the rupture of the negotiation. In the letters written before and after his departure from the Hague, he expressed his conviction that the preliminaries would yet be ratified. He was so confident in this expectation, that he even commenced arrangements with the treasurer for the return of the army to England, and the payment of the arrears due to all foreign troops, so that, to use his own words, "they might have no pretext to refuse marching, when ordered home, agreeably to their treaties." *

He was, however, grievously disappointed, not

* Letter to lord Godolphin, June 4th.

only by the failure of his sanguine hopes, but by the effect which the rupture of the negotiation produced both in England and France. Louis derived essential advantages from the suspension of the naval preparations in England, and from the fresh impulse which it enabled him to give to the spirit and ardor of his loyal subjects. In a circular letter which he addressed to the prelates and magistrates of the realm, he detailed, with great address, his own anxiety for peace, and the sacrifices which he had offered to make; while he expatiated, with equal art, on the insulting demands of the allies, and their refusal to continue the cessation of arms, unless, within two months, he expelled his grandson from Spain. "If I must continue the war," he added, "it is better to contend with my enemies, than with my own family." This manifesto, addressed to the feelings and passions of his people, kindled a spark of general enthusiasm and loyalty; all parties vied in contributing their property and personal service for the maintenance of the war, and the campaign was opened by the enemy with greater unanimity and energy than had been manifested in the whole course of the contest.

We cannot close this brief review of the negotiation without adverting to the accusation advanced against the duke of Marlborough, for clandestinely obstructing the overtures, and prolonging the war for his own interest; an accusation so long and so repeatedly urged by the advocates of the tory ministry as to be generally credited, and considered as *authentic* and well-founded, even by

several of our respectable historians. He is represented as the principal arbiter of the negotiations, and it is confidently asserted, that the other ostensible agents were not more significant than puppets, which echoed his voice, and moved by his impulse. *

Against this imputation we must protest, as equally unfounded and unjust. The extracts from his confidential letters, which have been submitted to the reader, will sufficiently prove that he was anxious for peace, and regretted the premature rupture of the negotiation; while these, as well as the whole series of correspondence, clearly shew that he was the organ of government, bound by instructions founded on the public resolutions of parliament, and emanating from the cabinet council. These he had not the power to modify, nor would he have fulfilled his duty in departing from them. With regard to the terms themselves, most were unquestionably just, whether considered in the light of equity or of policy; others, which were harsh in appearance, were defensible in principle, when we consider the character of the prince to whom they were offered, and the repeated acts of perfidy and aggression which had marked the long course of his reign.

We are, at the same time, far from condemning Louis for rejecting conditions which we think warranted by circumstances. He was justified in procuring the most favourable terms which he could obtain, and in risking the continuance of war, rather

* Somerville's Queen Anne, p. 395.

than submitting to the dictates of his enemies; but we cannot refrain from censuring Godolphin and the whig leaders, for imposing terms which were doubtless harsh and revolting to a monarch long flattered by success, and accustomed to awe the surrounding nations, without at the same time providing the surest means for giving efficiency to their pretensions, and extorting acquiescence by force when persuasion failed. Marlborough, as his correspondence testifies, perceived the necessity of such preparations, and urged that the only means of dictating the terms of peace was, by providing a force in the Netherlands far superior to that of the enemy. His instances were, however, unavailing, and to his disappointment in procuring a greater augmentation of troops, we may attribute the prolongation of the war, and the sacrifices which that prolongation entailed.

Although he remained firm to the grand principle in his instructions, that the whole Spanish monarchy should be transferred to the house of Austria, and no part ever appropriated to any prince of the house of Bourbon; yet he differed from Godolphin and the british cabinet on the grand question, relating to the evacuation of Spain. They concluded that nothing less than the cession of the whole monarchy to the house of Austria, at the expiration of two months, would secure the fulfilment of the preliminaries; whereas he was of opinion that the cession of the towns specified in the 22d article would place France in such a situation as to give ample security to the allies; and that if Philip should refuse to evacuate Spain, the

combined forces would speedily accomplish its reduction. We find this sentiment unequivocally expressed in a letter to Mr. Stanhope.

"*May* 27. * * * * The French ministers insist positively that they were not authorised to go this length, so that M. de Torcy is gone to lay the preliminary articles before his master, and is obliged to return his answer by the 4th of next month, till when, we have deferred taking the field. We have reason to hope, from the circumstances France is reduced to, they will be under the necessity of complying with these articles, which I believe you will agree with me, is the utmost that we could dare to expect. I own to you that we still may meet with some difficulties about the duke of Anjou's evacuating Spain; but when the french have delivered us all the cautionary towns, and complied with every thing else on this side, we shall have the better end of the staff, and be more able to force them."

He expresses himself still more strongly in a confidential letter to the treasurer, dated Ghent, June 16th.

"I have received the favour of your two letters of the 27th and 31st of the last month. I must own to you that I did think upon the arrival of M. Rouillé at Versailles, that the king of France would have offered some expedient that might have given satisfaction as to the evacuation of the entire monarchy; but if we hear nothing of it in a day or two, we may then depend upon it that they resolve to go on with the war. I have as much mistrust for the sincerity of France as any body

living can have, but I will own to you that, in my opinion, if France had delivered the towns promised by the preliminaries, and demolished Dunkirk and the other towns mentioned, they must have been at our discretion, so that if they had played tricks, so much the worse for themselves; but I do not love to be singular, especially when it was doing what France seemed to desire. I shall endeavour, and every body else ought, to do every thing in their power to keep up the spirit that is at this time in Holland against the french; and if you can, by sea, hinder corn going to them, they must submit."

Godolphin justly considered some expressions in this letter as indicating regret at the premature rupture of the negotiation; "but," he adds, "I shall keep your opinion, in that matter, to myself, because if it were known, I am afraid it might discourage people both here and in Holland." *

No stronger proof surely can be required, that Marlborough was not the arbiter of peace and war, and that he was controlled by the cabinet at home, who suppressed or gave currency to his opinions, as they suited or opposed their own views. We have, however, still stronger evidence to produce in his favour.

When he repaired to the army, lord Townshend continued at the Hague to conduct the negotiations and conclude the barrier treaty; but no definitive arrangement was to be effected without their joint signatures, as they were equally invested with full powers.

* From lord Godolphin, June 10-21.

We have already alluded to the difficulty which subsisted between the dutch and british cabinets for a formation of the barrier, a difficulty which Marlborough compared to that of washing a blackamoor white; for the dutch increased their demands for its extension, while the house of Austria objected to the insertion of many of the places proposed. The british cabinet endeavoured to mediate between the two extremes, and formed a project which they hoped would accord with the views of both parties. The dutch, however, insisted on the admission of Dendermond, and the castle of Ghent, against which the house of Austria strongly protested, and their protest was supported by Marlborough. At the same time it was proposed to insert two articles; viz. that the dutch should conclude no peace until the whole spanish monarchy was restored to the house of Austria, and the fortifications of Dunkirk were demolished. These articles he strongly supported, as a means of pledging the dutch to adhere to the general principle of the grand alliance; but they, with their characteristic prudence, objected to the insertion, as it might retard the conclusion of peace. On this subject the pensionary was unusually violent, and paid no regard to the remonstrances of Marlborough *, and a vehement altercation took place, which nearly produced a schism in the grand alliance. †

* We beg leave to call the attention of the reader to this circumstance, as it will sufficiently contradict the assertions of Torcy and his adherents, that the pensionary was completely governed by Marlborough.

† See these two projects in Swift's Remarks on the barrier treaty.

The king of France artfully taking advantage of this discordance, made an offer of an expedient for the 37th article, in the hopes of persuading the dutch to renew the negotiation. On the day of Rouillé's departure from the Hague, Petcum, though not formally authorised, offered in the name of Louis, as the modification of the 37th article, that three cautionary towns in Flanders should be delivered to the allies as a pledge of his sincerity for the execution of the preliminaries. This proposal seemed to be favourably received, and though it could not be acceded to, as not emanating officially from the french cabinet, it was taken into consideration. Through the same channel an answer was conveyed, evincing an inclination to accept the offer, if the three places in Flanders were named by the dutch, and three additional towns in Spain, which they also should designate, were included in the cession. During these proceedings, however, the king of France recalled his garrisons from the spanish towns, and Torcy informed the pensionary that his master was unable to comply with their demand on the latter point. But he confirmed the proposal of ceding any three towns in Flanders, with the exception of Cambray. He likewise proposed that Petcum should be removed to France for the purpose of receiving fresh overtures.

The pacific party among the dutch evinced, as usual, a strong inclination to treat on this proposal, and were even joined by the pensionary and the friends of England. The british cabinet, alarmed at these symptoms of a change of policy, found it

necessary to recede from the obnoxious articles in the barrier treaty, and at the same time to consent to the introduction of Dendermond, and the castle of Ghent. Lured by these offers, the pensionary and his partizans firmly closed the discussion, by announcing their positive determination not to depart from the 37th article, unless Louis would deliver into their possession three towns in Flanders at their own nomination, and the same number in Spain; or, if none of the latter were in his power, offer an expedient which they should deem of equal advantage and security. The mission of Petcum, or any other minister, to Paris was peremptorily rejected. *

In conformity with their promise, the british cabinet gratified the dutch by a modification of the barrier treaty. The new project being completely arranged, the conduct of the negotiation was confided principally to Townshend, and Marlborough was consulted only for the sake of form. During its progress he frankly testified his objections to the cession of Dendermond and the castle of Ghent, as prejudicial to the interests of England, and his letters to the treasurer are filled with remonstrances against the omission of the two articles relative to the monarchy of Spain, and the razure of Dunkirk. He never relied on the sincerity of France, but was willing to accept such pledges as, even if she should be insincere, would secure the reduction of Spain. He therefore proposed that a previous treaty should be concluded

* Letters from lord Townshend to secretary Boyle, Aug. 9th and 30th.

between England, the emperor, and Holland, specifying their respective contingents in men and money, and in such case was confident that the war would not last six months; but he persisted in his opinion, that by the omission of the two articles, France would derive hopes that the dutch would agree to peace, although the whole spanish monarchy was not restored, nor Dunkirk razed.

"I find by yours of the 12th, from London, the great desire you have for an expedient for the monarchy of Spain, so as that the treaty for the barrier might be finished. In the first place, the constitution of Holland is such, that no article can be a secret. I know that lord Townshend and lord president are very fond of having the treaty for the barrier settled; but at the same time I must let you know that I am positively of the opinion, that if you ever conclude that treaty, and do not, at the same time, make it a condition for the entire monarchy, as also for the demolishing Dunkirk, you will have next spring a peace without the demolishing of Dunkirk, and some part of Spain given to the duke of Anjou. Be assured that whenever England shall comply with the States as to their barrier as now desired, they will think it more their interest to be well with France than England: this is my positive opinion, but nobody shall ever know it but yourself." *

His friend the treasurer, alarmed at these strong and repeated objections, laid before him the posi-

* This letter to the treasurer is without date, but was evidently written in 1709, probably in July or August, while the barrier treaty was in agitation.

tive resolution of the whigs to gratify the dutch, to which he was apprehensive he should be obliged to accede; he therefore earnestly intreated him to wave his objections, and to take the merit of this conciliatory measure, that he might oblige the pensionary and the States so essentially, as to have the absolute power of making peace, which otherwise must depend entirely on them. "And," he added, "this will put it out of every body's power to say, that your want of compliance with the States in this point has been a great prejudice to peace." *

No solicitations, however, could induce the duke to accede even to the wishes of the treasurer, in opposition to his own conscientious conviction. A strong remonstrance from king Charles, against the omission of these articles and some other points of the barrier treaty, confirmed him in his opposition, and he thus declared his unalterable sentiment: "I continue of the opinion that, if the entire monarchy be not in the treaty of the barrier, the duke of Anjou will have some part of it, so that for the queen's honour and interest, and the safety of her minister, I beg you will think well of it before you depart from that article; for I believe it will be next to a miracle, if we have another campaign; and whatever happens on that point, I should think it much more for the service of the queen not to have it appear as if she had willingly consented, as it must be taken by every body, if that article be left out of the treaty of the barrier. I do agree with you, that if the States could be firm, we might in one year more have what we wish from France;

* Letter from lord Godolphin, Aug. 2. O.S.

but, as I fear Buys and his faction will every day grow stronger, the queen ought to be on her guard, as you see the malice of Harley gives us fair warning to be on ours." *

From the reply of Godolphin, we find that the queen fully concurred in the sentiments of the duke; and he adds, "I must tell you that lord Townshend and the lord president, and most of those who are like to have the consideration of this matter, are directly of another opinion. As for myself, I think your arguments are unanswerable; however, this thing has been already so much pressed by lord Townshend, and in the name of the pensionary, that it is with a good deal of difficulty I have been able to give it any delay, and I expect all those instances should be renewed as strong as ever, upon the arrival of the four posts which are now due. Upon the whole, we must pray heartily for your good success abroad; for at home I begin to be sensible we are to expect all the same difficulties next winter, which we struggled with in the last, and from the same † people."

In adverting to this information, Marlborough bitterly complains, "that though lord Townshend is a very honest man, he does not understand the temper of the dutch, and will probably mislead lord Somers." Nor does he scruple to regret the warmth of lord Townshend and his party, adding, "I pray God that they may be in the right, if otherwise, the fault will be laid to the charge of you and me." And in reply to an expression of

* Letter to lord Godolphin, Aug. 16.

† Lord Godolphin to the duke, Aug. 11. O. S.

the treasurer, that without peace all will fall to pieces in England, he justly observes, "I find by yours of the 14th, as well as a former letter, that you are of opinion that the affairs of England require peace, and yet all the orders of lord Townshend are full of obstructions. All my hopes are, that France is in so miserable a condition, that when you shall insist only on what is in their power, they must comply. I am entirely of the opinion, that you should by no means oppose what is pressed by lord Townshend, but I beg you will do nothing of yourself, but let 97* be answerable."

While the treasurer, with his usual deference to the opinion of his friend, was moved by these remonstrances, he was on the other hand assailed by the arguments of the whigs, for the immediate conclusion of the treaty, which they deemed necessary to conciliate the dutch, as well as to promote the protestant succession. "I must own," he observes in one of his letters, "I think there is a good deal to be said for both these opinions, and am, therefore, very far from taking upon myself to determine which is the rightest:" yet at this very time he was overruled by the whigs, and consented to comply with their wishes.

Thus while the treasurer was encouraging the duke of Marlborough to expect that his advice would be followed, and enjoining him to concert with Eugene the project of a treaty between England, the emperor, and Holland, for the speedy reduction of Spain; and while the cabinet professed

* Either the cabinet council, or more probably those who were charged with the management of the negotiation at the congress.

to the duke, that instructions should be sent to lord Townshend, for making similar arrangements with Zinzendorf and the pensionary, he had the mortification to be informed that they acquiesced in lord Townshend's project of concluding the barrier treaty, without stipulating for the evacuation of Spain and the razure of Dunkirk. On this intelligence, he sent a protest against the treaty, and could not refrain from candidly expressing his sentiments in a letter to Godolphin. "Not being upon the place I must not pretend to judge, but from my heart I wish it may meet with no ill consequences, for most certainly there is a very great party in Holland that thinks it their interest to give some part of Spain to the duke of Anjou; and I am afraid the same party are of opinion, that the demolishing of Dunkirk is more for the interest of England than theirs."

On the very same day he desired the duchess to represent to the queen his unwillingness to sign the treaty.

"*August* 19. * * * You will see by a paper I have writ to the lord treasurer, which I desire may not be seen by any body but yourself and the queen; it is necessary she should see it that she might be prepared if possible, that I might not be obliged to sign what I think so very prejudicial to England, and what may meet with such accidents as may prove very troublesome to all those that have given the advice; for it is most certain that lord Townshend does not judge right in that matter; for as soon as they have obtained their desires in the barrier, they can have no other thoughts or interest but that of making the peace

as soon as possible. I dare not write what I think is reasonable on this subject, since our best friends will think that I am partial to the house of Austria; but I call God to witness, that my concern proceeds from the love I have for the interest of my country, and my concern for such of my friends as are now in the ministry."

To Lord Godolphin.

"*August* 26. * * * * How far the dutch may continue firm, I have my doubts, notwithstanding what is written by lord Townshend, in his letter of the 20th, to Mr. Boyle. I must also continue of opinion, that when the States shall be acquainted with the orders lord Townshend has received, that he will find them every day more unreasonable in their demands. I wish I may be mistaken, for I have no wish but the queen and my country's service; but I am afraid I shall live to see this proceeding * found fault with, since, in all probability, the dutch will not be contented, unless they obtain some advantage on our trade."

In consequence of this decided opposition, Godolphin sent full powers to lord Townshend, by which he was enabled to conclude the treaty, as it was arranged between the english and dutch cabinets, adding, that when it was signed, the duke would support it, though he had refused to affix his signature. At the same time he announced this determination to lord Sunderland as one of the whig chiefs, and declared his opinion

* The barrier treaty.—His prediction was verified by the events, for the treaty was stigmatised by parliament; lord Townshend, who signed it, severely censured; and all who advised its ratification declared enemies to the queen and kingdom. See ch. 107.

that it would not be productive of those fatal consequences which the duke apprehended. *

In conformity with these orders, lord Townshend signed the barrier treaty alone, and it was afterwards objected to by Swift, who, in his celebrated pamphlet, "The Conduct of the Allies," observes, "this treaty was only signed by *one* of the plenipotentiaries; and I have been told *the other* was heard to say, he would rather lose his right hand, than set it to such a treaty."

These instances, among many others, will sufficiently prove that Marlborough did not direct the negotiation, that he differed in many material points from the cabinet, and was guided by positive instructions, which he could not venture to transgress. Had he, indeed, possessed the sole management of affairs in peace and war, he would doubtless have framed such conditions as would have been accepted, or would have made such mighty preparations as would have enabled him to dictate his own terms in the heart of France. In this case, the treaty of Utrecht would not have stained the annals of this deluded and devoted country.†

* Lord Godolphin to lord Sunderland, Aug. 17.

† We regret that the limits of our work will not permit us to introduce more of this interesting correspondence between Marlborough and Godolphin, because it would still more strongly prove that the duke was sincerely anxious for peace, and that he was overruled by the decisions of the cabinet.

END OF THE FOURTH VOLUME.

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